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THE CHANCE FOR DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP

After the darker days of this war, when we conceived the ambition of leading Europe to freedom, it was in the Atlantic Charter that Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt summed up the principles that would guide them. An answer which Mr. Eden gave in the House on January 26th recalled one of its salient clauses in a way that requires clearer definition. He had reaffirmed the pledge which Mr. Churchill gave in reference to the Polish borderland that territorial changes made during the war shall not be recognised "unless they take place with the free consent and good will of the parties concerned." He added that the Government "stand by the principles enunciated in the Atlantic Charter." A Member then asked him to make it plain that the Prime Minister's statement "was not intended to refer to enemy territory." To this his answer was that "so far as enemy countries are concerned, they of course are governed by the terms of unconditional surrender already announced."

This means, we take it, that if the enemy surrenders unconditionally, he cannot claim the benefit of any previous pledges. In particular he cannot remind us either of the first clause of the Charter which disclaimed any designs of territorial aggrandisement, nor of the second which said that the Allies "desire no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned." Technically this is correct. We have always argued that terms should be laid down: but we agree that this is what unconditional surrender means.

Does this, then, sweep the Charter away in so far as it deals with the enemy peoples? That would be to forget its purpose and origin. It was the Government's response to the general demand for a definition of war-aims, which came from American no less than British democracy. Its pledges were made, not to the enemy, but to British and American citizens. It described for our reassurance the broad principles the settlement will follow. The enemy may be debarred from citing it, but our right to do so is clear. The first and second clauses declare that this shall not be a predatory peace and that in territorial changes the democratic principle of consent shall be observed. The Charter hinted at no exceptions, and the democratic principle presumably applies to Abyssinia and Libya, to the Balkans and East Prussia. The Charter is no one's property, it is the common measure of agreement. It is in many ways an old-fashioned document, which accepts incidentally the shibboleth of sovereignty and talks glibly about self-determination. It did not stop, however, at Wilsonian liberalism; it contained economic clauses which suggest that some advance has been made in international thought since the end of the last war. It promises the world two fundamentals; freedom from want and liberty for the individual and the group. It means, amongst other things, that populations, including enemy populations, shall not be treated as mere objects of barter and power politics.

The Italian Example

Why are we not all throwing our hats in the air about the Bari Conference? Why is there no news, except the most meagre snippets, in the press? What ties the tongue of the B.B.C.? Why has Mr. Eden made no great speech, modestly boasting, as Palmerston or Russell or Gladstone would have done, that we were at last fulfilling our promise of restoring democracy to Italy?

Here is the first congress of the democratic parties within a liberated country. Here is the venerable Croce explaining that as a Conservative he regards this democratic movement as the one security against anarchy. Here is Sforza, the ancient Liberal statesman, speaking for all the parties in denouncing the King who has betrayed his oath and passed power into the hands of Mussolini. The conference does not ask for a republic; there are hints that the King's grandson, with a Regent, might be an acceptable compromise. It is the most orderly of conferences; if there were far more dissensions than there are that would be in the nature of recrudescent democracy. This correct assembly exactly fulfils all published expectations, and demands no more than the pledges of the Three Powers in Moscow. Yet in one of the few pieces of information that comes through, we are told that the wall is surrounded by armed police. It was with reluctance that the Allied authorities, who had once postponed it, finally agreed to its meeting. The proceedings were to be fully broadcast from Radio Bari. Croce's speech came over, and so, after an interval of twelve hours, did some other bits of the conference. Censorship and Allied political opposition were made more odd by the announcement from Radio Bari that the railwaymen, whose union is part of the re-established Confederation of Labour, had sabotaged one of the two main Italian railways which feed the German front. No better example could be given of the military value of reviving Italian democracy.

In time, no doubt, the Allies will be compelled to come round to the popular side as they have in Yugoslavia, and must in France and elsewhere. Military expediency, geography and the forces within the democratic powers compel us sooner or later to collaborate with the resistance movements in Europe. Quite simply, you can't fight Fascists with Fascists; you must accept anti-Fascists as your allies. The B.B.C. has done an immense job as a cohesive force in the resistance movement of the Continent, and British tenacity in 1940 and our appeal to other nations to continue fighting gave us a unique prestige. Must we each time throw away the good will that is already ours by trying to restore kings who have played the Fascist game, and supporting bankers and landlords and military chiefs, only in the end to yield with a bad grace where we might have led with credit? We have waited seven and a half years, during which Spanish democracy has been strangled, before deciding officially to admit that Franco is on the enemy's side. In Italy we are told that all the liberated area is soon to be transferred to Badoglio and the King. If all the democratic forces in Italy are against Badoglio and the King, why again go through the stage in which we support the enemy of democracy? Britain could still speak with the voice of leadership in Continental affairs, and the statesman whose name was first associated with this policy would be the inevitable leader of Britain in external affairs for many years to come. He would be what Wilson nearly was, and failed to be, at the end of the last war.

The Soviet Constitution

The forthcoming revision of the Soviet Constitution to grant new powers to the constituent Republics in the fields of defence and of foreign affairs may be a turning point for European as well as Russian history. Mr. Molotov's speech shows that the change is real and not a paper concession. In future, each State of the Union may conclude treaties and conduct its diplomatic relations separately, though in unison with the Foreign Commissariat. This increased liberty will, of course, be subject to the continued control of the Communist Party; a unified economic system will remain and the Red Army will continue to be a federal defence force, though it is now to be built up of distinct formations from each Republic. In structure at least the U.S.S.R. appears to be at last moving toward the form of State organisation which has long been the Socialist ideal—a multi-national federation which allows wide diversity between its parts while it retains an over-riding unity. This is a framework within which flexibility may grow, provided the U.S.S.R. has a period of peace. The Bolshevik leaders in the early days of the Revolution spoke of their aim as a "Socialist League of Nations": Russia is now becoming a new League to which the smaller States of Eastern Europe may be increasingly willing to adhere.

The South American Crisis

Argentina's break with the Axis is a matter for satisfaction but hardly for the enthusiasm displayed by the Foreign Office and inspired quarters. It means that the direct and open relations between the Ramirez Government and the German and Japanese embassies have come to an end. But it is more than probable that the break was a desperate effort to avoid the disclosure of the widespread system of espionage and intrigue which has been based on Buenos Aires. In any case, much of the Fascist organisation in Latin America is proceeding by means of the Falange which has close relations with Franco Spain. Mr. Hull has said that he possesses information confirming the part played by Argentina in the Bolivian putsch and in the preparations for similar revolts in other South American States. He has also implied that for the moment the economic pressure which was impending against Argentina has been suspended. Are we to deduce that Mr. Hull is satisfied that the threat has been sufficient? A diplomatic break will have no effect on the expansion of Fascism in the South American continent. Mr. Hull must not stop there. Publication of Mr. Hull's documents should not be withheld out of tenderness for the Argentine dictatorship. Lombardo Toledano, leader of the South American trade union movement, considers the present crisis to be of sufficient danger to justify an emergency meeting of his own organisation, the Latin-American Confederation of Workers, and delegates from the A.F. of L., C.I.O., and their Canadian affiliates at the end of next week. The Allies must also realise that the Fascist threat in South America, involving risk of a clash between Argentina and Brazil, cannot be met by patch-work diplomacy.

Commonwealth Independence

The mixed reception accorded in Canada to Lord Halifax's Toronto speech is likely to influence the attitude of Mr. Mackenzie King at the meeting of Empire Prime Ministers which, Mr. Churchill announces, will be held shortly. When Lord Halifax said that, in terms of world power politics, the Dominions are individually small States, weak in isolation, he was stating a proposition whose truth Australia and New Zealand have implicitly admitted by last month's Canberra Agreement (providing for joint co-operation in foreign and economic policy) and which no realistic Canadian would dispute. But when he went on to urge a Canadian audience to recognise the need for closer Commonwealth interdependence in defence and foreign policy, Lord Halifax forgot the factor of *Geopolitik*. Australia and New Zealand are geographically near neighbours; but, just as Britain cannot dissociate herself from the nearby Continent, so Canada falls naturally within the geographic ambit of the United States. Canadian reluctance to be committed exclusively to policies formulated in London is reflected in Mr. King's insistence that, for the preservation of world peace, he prefers a system of *all* "like-minded States."

Still Famine

Mr. Amery recently announced that the famine in Bengal is over, and that it has not cost more than a million lives. By the scale which has hitherto prevailed in India under British rule, this is a low figure: the influenza epidemic after the last war cost 13,000,000 lives. But is this modest total final and has the famine ceased? Mr. Stuart Emeny, whose cables to the *News Chronicle* are always worth reading, states that after a brief interval during the rice harvest, it has begun again. Prices are soaring once more, and the starving villagers have begun to trek back to the relative plenty of Calcutta. For this he blames primarily the provincial government. Its improvised mechanism of purchase and control has functioned badly: it has tolerated much graft and after months of delay it has not yet got rationing going in Calcutta. As we see the facts, the Central and the provincial governments were equally dilatory and incompetent, but after inexcusable obstruction the Centre did eventually mend its ways. Should the Bengal Ministry, then, be superseded? It should be remembered that its majority is unreal; it depends (1) on the fact that over a score of Hindu nationalist members are in detention, and (2) on the support of the European block. There is much to be said for an attempt to form a coalition, since one of the contributory causes of the famine was lack of confidence in the administration. But we are not sure that even in this crisis the Muslim League and its opponents are willing to work together. The U.S. Congress decision to include India in the scope of Unrra's operations may benefit her, but it was probably conceived as a rebuke to the British Empire—not, in the light of this famine, undeserved.

Another Aspect of Mr. Butler's Bill

The religious issue will not have the centre of the stage to itself while the Education Bill is in committee. The local authorities will now have their turn. The principal issue which affects them is the extent to which, outside the County Boroughs, educational responsibility is to be concentrated in the hands of the County Councils. A good many of the boroughs which are at present authorities for elementary education only would like to achieve recognition as all-purpose authorities, in preference to handing over their function to the County Councils and receiving back an uncertain portion in the form of delegated powers. The prospect of this being allowed on a large scale seriously alarms some of the County Councils, especially those near London; for if all the larger urban areas were allowed to become independent authorities there would be little chance of creating a satisfactory plan of education for the rest of these counties. It is fairly generally agreed that the existing divorce between the control of elementary and higher education must be got rid of as an integral part of the new scheme; but the Borough Councils and the County Councils do not see eye to eye about the areas appropriate for the new all-purpose authorities, or about the degree of delegation of powers to be conceded by the County Councils to the smaller authorities where the latter cease to be independent. The general public is apt to be bored by this sort of administrative problem; but the issue is really of vital importance because it is bound to affect, not only education, but the whole future of local government areas and powers. In our view, education, like a number of other vital services, needs unified administrative responsibility over large areas, and it would be a calamity if the Bill were allowed to chop up still further the control of education in such counties as Essex, Middlesex and Surrey.

Sir Richard Acland's Gift

Sir Richard Acland last week-end formally handed over to the National Trust his beautiful and extensive West Country estates, constituting much the biggest gift ever made to the Trust. In handing them over, he said that his conscience had long been troubled by the private possession of so much land, and went on to point out that, if he retained possession, a part of the estate would have to be sold to pay estate duties at his death, and most of the rest would probably go the same way on the death of his heir. By giving the property with its rent-roll to the National Trust he could feel that he was doing his utmost both to make the position of his tenants secure for ever and to preserve a productive and beautiful area of English countryside at once for agriculture and for amenity. Sir Richard is, of course, entirely right, as well as generous. The National Trust is fortunately so constituted as to be able to make itself responsible not only for preserving "places of historic interest and natural beauty," but also for treating its possessions, not as museum pieces but as productive assets. Land is most beautiful not when it is unproductive but when it is appropriately farmed; and historic houses are most beautiful, not when their emptiness echoes to the feet of an occasional tourist, but when they are used for appropriate natural purposes—as country schools, camps, convalescent homes, holiday centres, or the like. It is to be hoped that Sir Richard Acland will find imitators in what he has done.

PARLIAMENT: Prospects for P.R.

Wednesday, noon.

HERBERT MORRISON introduced the two-day debate on electoral reform with a capable, non-controversial survey of the historical background and an outline of the agenda for the forthcoming Speaker's Conference. (These seemed sufficiently wide, though Sir Douglas Hacking was later ruled out of order when he tried to advocate th cutting-down of expenditure in constituenci *between* elections; all charitable subscriptions b Members should be made illegal, he said. From so formidable a Tory, this seemed indeed th credo of a poacher turned gamekeeper). Morriso quoted Gladstone—more sincere than late statesmen in his confession of the disabilitie imposed by old age, including inability to grappl with the complexities of Proportional Representation. Morrison also cited some of the obviou problems of redistribution, admitting that h could not solve them. It seems likely that th more glaring anomalies, such as Hendon's 208,60 voters, will be dealt with before the Genera Election, but that there will be no early attemp to make a sweeping and definitive rearrangemen of boundaries; indeed, with a *permanent* body o boundary commissioners—the present suggestio —a whole-hog, simultaneous redistribution is unnecessary; and it would be useless without fir plans for the location of industry and reasonabl complete resettlement of those shifted by war.

Sir Herbert Williams foresaw that he would i future be representing a much larger slice o Croydon. (An Hon. Member: If you ar elected. Sir H. Williams: I shall get in easily. He denounced Liberal support for P.R. as "pur gerrymandering." He was also against th abolition of the university and business votes this did not surprise Members when it emerge that Sir Herbert and his wife had between then six votes, of which they can use four.

Interruptions, as Mr. Speaker has often complained, prolong speeches inordinately; amon the sufferers in this respect were Sir Herbe Holdsworth and Arthur Woodburn, or thei audience. P.R. proved able to engender almos as much heat as religion or Basic English. Severa Members expressed the fear that P.R. might bree small, "interested" parties—Farmers' Party Roman Catholic Party, and so on. Other retorted that such groups already exist as co erently as if they were parties. Pritt made one f his too rare appearances to speak on behalf of .R. He claimed that he and Hogg "share the istinction of being the most quarrelsome Members in the House." The debate later went orth, Scottish Members feeling that it would be particular injury to Scotland if a reduced populaon meant reduced representation.

An agreeable interlude was a short Adjournment ebate on the calling-up of Grantham chimney-weeps, one of whom was alleged by Kendall to e now merely an officer's batman. McCorquodale eplied, for the Ministry of Labour, that batmen ere essential fighting units, and indicated that, hatever representations other departments might ake for release, Service departments could ways ultimately say, "What we have we hold."

Read in Eden's charming, cultured voice, the ruesome details of Japanese ill-treatment of risoners, the cruel but proper announcement at the recent welcome postcards were probably "dictated," filled the comparatively few Members resent on Friday with a peculiar horror—hardly oted sufficiently by the newspapers.

There have been several deliberate jokes at uestion-time this week. They are less funny an the unintentional kind, but also reduce the ouse to thunderous guffaws. Vernon Bartlett, complaining that the Services were allocated twice as many razor blades as civilians, threatened to confuse Mr. Speaker by growing a bushy beard; to which Dalton retorted neatly, "Were my honourable friend so to act, he would not incur the same penalties as if he were in the Forces." There was a great row about an alleged intention of the Ministry of Food to send some Spanish oranges to Eire: Mr. Speaker wound it up, and moved on to the next question by saying, "These oranges seem rather explosive." On the same day Mr. Speaker, disentangling himself from some Tory's pedantry, said "quite frankly" that such-and-such a course would be according to the letter of the law, but that he didn't propose to follow it—a refreshing development in the Chair, some of whose previous occupants have tended to undue stiffness.

One elaborate joke fell completely flat: a poor little Labour Member, *re* rubber boots, said, "May we take it that the Minister is determined that these men shall be masters of their feet and captains of their soles?"

The Prime Minister, questioned about the legal definition of the phrase "cessation of hostilities," observed that it would be "so much easier to define that date" when we had "actually reached it."

Pontifex Minor

HE CASE FOR ELECTORAL REFORM

ARE we in this war fighting to defend democracy, r is the heritage we value rather the institutions at may one day evolve into democracy? So ng as property governs men's lives by giving r withholding the opportunity to work, we are ot free. We shall begin to realise the ideal of quality in political power only when all our hildren enjoy an equal chance of mental and hysical growth. In all that matters most demoacy has still to be won. But we have our pricess tradition of civil liberty. And we have in r representative system, creaking and imperfect ough its machinery is, the means to advance.

Parliament has reached this year one of those eriodical occasions when the machine must be verhauled. Some fundamental questions must oubtless stand over. Would a system based on ccupation or function suit modern life better an the old territorial arrangement? Are not e vast constituencies of to-day destructive of l sound political activity? Should we not do etter if we were organised as voters in facries and neighbourhood groups? But after ling out such questions, a good deal remains put right: our ancient territorial system is orking badly.

Everyone realises that the absurd inequalities the size of constituencies require not merely astic redistribution to-day, but a permanent achinery of adjustment. As the Vivian Comittee reckoned, in the undersized constituencies million votes elect thirty members, while in ersized seats a million electors return only nine embers. Then come a series of anomalies hich all tell in favour of property. The peritted expenditure by candidates is too high: e abuse of cars has its importance. Then mes that curious survival, the representation of e universities, which gives the Tory Party ten t of twelve superfluous seats. The other inefensible survival is the qualification for business emises, which accounts for from 500 to 700 otes in each constituency and may give the ories round about thirty seats. Finally, the umber of seats won by a minority vote has nged in the last generation in general elections om 33 to 309.

This last fact brings us to our biggest problem. system that suited two parties fairly well ecomes a scandalous game of chance when we ve three or more. The record has been studied r a generation by Mr. J. H. Humphreys, the teran advocate of proportional representation: has now been set out by Mr. R. W. G. Mackay a quite admirable little book which every alert citizen should read.* Our traditional system, which gives a seat to the candidate who heads the poll with a relative majority, always distorts the distribution of seats among parties. The most notorious instance happened in 1924, when the Tories, with a minority of the votes in the contested elections, secured a majority of 200 in the House, when they should have been in a minority of 40. Not even with the uncontested seats had they a bare majority. It happens that it is always the Tories who gain (though Labour also gained by the anomaly in 1929). In the seven general elections between 1918 and 1935 they won on an average 155 seats above the figure to which they were entitled on a proportionate reckoning of the votes cast. How the thing works can be clearly seen in this table, which summarises the returns in 1935 in the boroughs and county divisions of the eleven southern counties of England, stretching from Kent to Cornwall:

Party	Votes polled	Seats won	Seats in in proportion to votes
Government	2,068,323	77	50
Labour ..	836,573	0	21
Liberal ..	320,307	2	8

The figures speak for themselves. This system ranks among the chief bulwarks of property.

There are only two remedies we need consider. The simpler of them retains the single member constituency, but introduces the alternative vote. Each elector indicates with the figures 1, 2, 3 the order of his preferences among the candidates. Thus a Socialist may give his first choice to orthodox Labour, his second to Commonwealth, his third to Liberalism. A Tory who cannot elect his own man may prefer to help the Liberal in order to defeat the Socialist. The system is perfectly fair. It ensures that no member can be elected by a minority vote. The advantage now enjoyed by property is removed. A House chosen in this way could not seriously falsify the broad tendencies of the electorate. None the less, the reflection of opinion could only be approximate. Far too often Socialists and Tories would have to be contented with the choice of a Liberal as the second best.

The second and bolder of the two remedies is P.R. Its aim is that every voter shall elect his representative: no votes, or very few votes, shall be wasted. At present the minority in every constituency goes unrepresented: this disadvantage only P.R. can remove. The plan is that constituencies are grouped and enlarged, so as to return on an average five Members. Each elector casts only one vote, but may indicate his preferences by the alternative vote. A quotient is fixed, being the number of votes required to elect a member. The surplus votes of candidates who poll more than the quotient are distributed according to their second preferences, and the same thing is done with those who poll less, starting with the lowest. A House chosen in this way is a pretty fair mirror of the country's opinions. Each group can usually elect a man of their own political colour. No one need feel that he has cast his vote in vain. The arithmetical processes may sound complicated: but these concern only the Returning Officer, and he has only to follow the rules. All the voter has to do is to mark his ballot with a 1, 2, 3 in the order of his preferences. The size of the proposed constituencies may be a disadvantage: but already the electorate is so big that in fact the old intimacy is lost.

So long as we consider only the effective rights of the individual citizen the case for P.R. is unanswerable. But what of its effects on government? It will usually mean that absolute majorities in the Commons will be small and may often be lacking. This may mean coalition, and it is argued that under these conditions Governments will tend to be feeble and incapable of bold legislation. It is also said that P.R. leads to the multiplication of parties, and this case is usually based on parallels from France and Germany which seem to us erroneous. The system prevailing on the Continent, where votes are cast for party lists as a whole, differs widely from that advocated in this country. France had from 1919 to 1927 an electoral system that was a gross caricature of P.R. But the last three of her general elections were fought in single member constituencies. She had as many parties after P.R. as during it. Germany also had numerous parties before the adoption of her ultra-meticulous system of P.R. The Reichstag had to function under abnormal difficulties, and it is true that it had always to resort to coalitions. Two new and formidable parties did emerge—Communism and Fascism—as in some form and degree they did everywhere. P.R. undoubtedly makes it easier for a young party to establish itself, but keeps its numbers within bounds when the tide runs in its favour. Under our majority system Hitler might have started in business a little later, but it is highly probable that he would have won an absolute majority before 1933: under P.R. he never got an absolute majority at all. Nothing, to our thinking, can be deduced from German history which differs too widely from our own.

Far nearer to our own public life is that of Sweden, where P.R. has made for continuity and for steady and popular Governments which have to their credit a long record of bold social legislation. The same thing is true of Eire, where Mr. Cosgrave and Mr. De Valera have each held office for ten years. The argument that in the interest of "strong government" it is desirable that majorities should be disproportionately inflated, savours of totalitarian theory. We like it the less because in our country it is always property that gains by it. Certainly P.R. favours a Fabian gradualism. But if the Left were to win a swollen parliamentary majority which had no counterpart in the electorate, would the result be bold, revolutionary legislation? The Lords would have their cue, and if they failed the reply of property would be a resort to Fascism and violence.

This is a strong case, worthy of careful consideration. In any event it is clear that we must not rest content with our present system. The smallest reform worth considering is the adoption of the alternative vote. P.R. might be introduced first of all in the cities. We recollect that in 1931 Mr. Churchill favoured that solution as "incomparably the fairest, the most scientific and on the whole the best in the public interest." As leader of the Tory Party, does he adhere to this view?

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* *Coupon or Free.* Secker and Warburg. 5s.

SICILY TO-DAY

[The following first-hand account of the Allied occupation of Sicily comes from a British soldier who was there from the landing on July 10, 1943, until his recent return to this country.]

THE invasion of Sicily was not only a military rehearsal of the invasion of the rest of Europe, but obviously a political one as well. Our political tasks in Sicily were clear. We had to win the sympathy and co-operation of the Sicilians, and to prove to them, and to the world, that the Atlantic Charter and similar democratic promises are a reality. We could achieve these aims by ameliorating the life of the war-stricken peasantry, rehabilitating bombed towns and battle areas, reorganising and developing the social services, importing and distributing food and vital clothing, and destroying the influence of Fascism. After five months, how far have we succeeded, and what remains to be done?

From the outset, two factors were in our favour. First, Sicily was ripe for the overthrow of Fascism. Secondly, the robber methods of the German occupation had utterly drained the economic resources of the already impoverished island. Fascism had hit Sicily particularly hard. The island paid dearly for the privilege of being governed from Rome. Whilst the peasantry lived on the most meagre diet, large quantities of grain and fruit were compulsorily exported to the mainland. With Italy's entry into the war, the hardships were increased. Throughout the summer of 1943, there was no bread, no "pasta"—the main food in Sicily—and no meat. Then from July 10, the restraint of the German troops in the rear utterly collapsed and they indulged in mass robbery and violence. Whole villages were systematically looted of food, clothing, bedding, jewellery and other valuables, whilst in the towns shops were sacked as the army fell back. From that date the Sicilians suffered their bitterest humiliation and terror.

The Sicilians were eager for change. But against this must be reckoned the effects of our intensive pre-invasion bombing of the large population centres, and of anti-Allies propaganda. Sicily was by no means sure that she wanted the British or American variety of change. Add to this the "hate thy enemy" theme, which, complete with lavish illustrations, had been plugged over the air. Add the fact that Rome radio and the press, especially from the time of our landings, told the country that the British would inflict every known violence and bestiality. No wonder then that when our troops entered the southern towns of Noto, Vizzini, Ramacca, etc., during the first days of the invasion, they were sometimes met by a silent and uncertain people very different from those who greeted us in Tunis, Sousse and Sfax.

It was during these days that we achieved our first political success. The army advanced rapidly and with complete order. In their contacts with the civilians, the men were good-humoured, kind and helpful. In a fortnight, three years of propaganda was nullified. The news spread rapidly. On July 10, far to the north, the people of Messina trembled when they heard the fateful tolling of the bells which announced the invasion. A fortnight later they were watching the sea and the road eagerly for the approach of the Allies. If they had not forgotten the almost total destruction of their city, they were prepared to forgive. Those who have seen the extent of the damage and disruption of life in this town, will agree that we won a really big political victory, and laid a firm basis for complete winning over the Sicilians. Why then, do so many Sicilians now look at us with questioning and doubtful eyes?

When Amgot issued the first ration of white American flour, *via* the small shopkeeper, in the village of Galati St. Anna, the proprietor kept the white flour, and issued to the unsuspecting villagers a very inferior coarse brown German substitute. And there was no power to prevent it, nor to punish. So operated Amgot. The right hand provided and the left hand deprived. The official price of flour is a few lira a kilo, and the ration is 100 grammes a day per head. When Amgot issued flour at 8 lira a kilo, the black marketeers re-issued it at 15. The people bought at this price, and nothing was done about it. A week later the price went up to 30 lira a kilo, and still no steps were taken on a large scale. Later the price became 60–70 lira.

In the summer—until about September in Sicily—it is difficult to starve. There is an abundance of fruit and a fair amount of vegetable. Near the coast there is fish. By October all food was scarce. You could buy ice-cream and pastries at *6d.* each (a Sicilian must work a whole day to buy three pastries). But there was no fruit apart from lemons, no vegetables, no canned food, no fish in the interior, little meat and little flour. Nobody is starving in Sicily, but serious malnutrition is the rule. Above all, the people have stopped asking troops when we are going to bring food. Instead there have been food demonstrations in towns like Messina. The cruellest indictment of our failure to foresee and prepare for the food shortage is the startling appearance of casual prostitution by women whose husbands are in the Italian army. "Liberated" women have offered their bodies for a tin of bully beef.

Amgot has not been successful in reconstituting even the minimum social services. The schools did not open until December 1, ten weeks after fighting ceased. One wonders, in view of other evidence, how the teachers are being selected. Either none at all, or only the scantiest provision was made to link up towns with their surrounding villages. Thus there was little distribution of whatever local produce was available. The roads were crowded with ox-carts and donkey carts as well as pedestrians, seriously hampering military traffic. Medical services are still of the most haphazard nature. Many local doctors went to Italy with the Germans; others moved out of battle zones and have not returned. None of those left is obliged to visit a sick person if he does not wish to.

Underlying—and sometimes overlying—every other problem of social reorganisation in occupied enemy territory is the problem of Fascism. Much of what happened in Sicily will be paralleled in other countries. Sicily has been, and still is, the first real testing ground. The issue is clear; it is not, as in Africa, complicated by an Arab question, nor by the peculiarities of French politics.

In Sicily Fascism had the great advantage of being already organised. The Party and the groups were there—shaken, fractured perhaps, but still there. Anti-Fascism had to be organised. Yet the first detailed proclamation of the Allies posted in every village and town, declared the Fascist Party to be illegal and dissolved, and also declared *all* other political organisations to be equally illegal! Thus by virtually banning united action by the people the most valuable weapon for attacking not only the political roots of Fascist influence and teaching, but all forms of racketeering, was lost to us. Amgot officials and Field Security men wandered about in the dark with hopelessly incomplete lists, waiting to catch a criminal, when an authorised village council could have infinitely simplified their work.

It may be coincidence, but the highest native civil authority in Messina is the mayor, Micali, well known to the people of his city for his Fascist activities. Micali is recognised by one and all as the arch-villain in the administrative plot, but up to a few weeks ago was, and I suppose still is, Amgot's chief adviser on local affairs. In the same town it is accepted as unchangeable that the majority of the interpreters employed by Amgot are not only just ex-Fascist Party members, but are ardent Fascist sympathisers. Several "squadristi"—foundation members of the Party—are known by the people to have returned to the city to develop illegal activity.

The people must be given knowledge, and the power to use it. Fascism specialises in giving information, but rarely knowledge. What we have done in Sicily to counter false information is negligible. Most Sicilians still believe that the Germans utterly destroyed London in 1940, captured Moscow in 1941, and are subjected to the vilest atrocities in Russia and in British prisoner-of-war camps. They have no idea of the future—or fate—of Sicily.

How can we give power to the people? How can we give them a rightful share of self-government. The stated Amgot mode of operation is to collaborate where possible with the existing local authority. In nine cases out of ten this means a Fascist authority. How then is it decided where collaboration is possible? Who decided to collaborate with Micali, the Fascist mayor of Messina?

In any village or town, only the people are in a position to determine whether or not the existing local authority is to be trusted, and only they are capable quickly of indicating which men are reliable. If free, secret, local elections had been the first act of Amgot, if the people could have chosen their own representatives, we should long ago have won over Sicily, and presented an irrefutable example to the rest of suffering Europe. Not until the end of October did the guarantee of political freedom, encouragingly but belatedly, come from the Three Power Conference in Moscow. It has not yet been implemented.

Amgot has set itself a difficult task; by Amgot will the Allies be judged. The example of Sicily shows that the crux of the problem of defeating Fascism and substituting the benefits of democracy lies in the necessity for sharing power with the people. The very essence of democratic government is that it is by the people. The very concept of Amgot indicates a fallacious belief that democratic government can be imposed from outside. We need the fullest help of all the people in occupied Europe. Unless we radically change our ways, we shall never have it.

Sicilians feel themselves at the mercy of small officials who cannot understand their language, and who appear to have little appreciation of their difficulties. They are groping blindly in the post-battle chaos. We have done nothing to give them a lead, nothing to make them feel that the democracy preached by the Allies is the road for them.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

DISCOLOURED lights slant from the high rose
window
Upon the sightseers and the faithful
And those who shelter from the rain this Sunday
The clergy in their starched white surplices
Send prayers like pigeons circling overhead
Seeking the ghostly hands that give them bread.

The togaed statesmen on their scribbled plinths
Stand in dull poses, dusty as their fame
Crammed in the chapter of a schoolboy's book;
Their eyes have lost their shrewd and fallible look.

Kneeling by Gladstone is a girl who sobs.
Something profounder than the Litany
Moves in the dark beneath the restless steps
Of this pale swirl of human flux.
Soft fingers touch the worn marmoreal stone.
The pale girl reaches out for what has gone.

The thin responses falter in the air.
Only the restless footsteps hurry on,
Escaping that which was in the beginning,
Is now, and ever shall be—
See, the girl
Adjusts her fashionable veil.
The vergers clack their keys, the soldiers go,
The white procession shuffles out of sight.

The incubus is shifted to the stars,
The flux is spun and drifted through the night,
And no one stays within that holy shell
To know if that which Is is good or ill.

ALUN LEWIS

A LONDON DIARY

None of my friends who have long lived in Japan claims to understand the psychology of that strange country. They agree about the exquisite and inhuman aestheticism of a few—lineal descendants of the general in Japanese history who ended a perfect day of ferocious slaughter on the battle-field by setting his officers a competition in the arrangement of wild flowers. They agree about the brutality of the military and the corruption and barbarism of the armies overseas. They agree too about the 20,000 or so in concentration camps, the suppressed element of revolt in the factories and the charm and kindliness of millions of common people. The sickening cruelty of Japanese treatment of prisoners of war comes as no surprise to them. Nothing could exceed in horror what the Japanese did to the Chinese in Nanking and in the earlier part of the war against China. The novelty for us is that for the first time we have met a foreign enemy who is apparently oblivious of the post-war effects of what he does. Conventions about prisoners of war remain between us and the Germans; British prisoners receive parcels and even do examinations in British Universities from German prison camps. But Japan is making war on us in the total fashion that Germany makes war on Poles and Russians.

* * *

Two points stand out. First, the rulers of Japan, who have shown some marked consideration in the last two years towards the Chinese and deliberately wooed the Burmese and other peoples whose countries they have occupied, are still hoping to lead Asia and, indeed, the coloured peoples of the world against the Whites. (They would make less progress in Burma and elsewhere if the British would change their imperialist attitude.) Taking revenge for the past superiority of the Whites by humiliating, bullying and torturing British and American prisoners is presumably to be understood as part of this ambitious plan. The second point is that many thousand British and American prisoners are still alive and may yet be saved. Mr. Eden carefully pointed out that the farther away from Tokio the worse things are, and that the most bestial horrors are carried out by the military authorities out of control of the Japanese Government. It is a slender but real chance, as Mr. Eden said, that the Japanese authorities may yet decide that, since Britain and America cannot be conquered, their best policy will be to stop atrocities which can only lead to their own final destruction. Moreover, the rulers of Japan may still recall that they were once proud of a code of "honour"; they have always been sensitive to the world's censure and may still dislike the notion that they are earning the loathing of all civilised men.

* * *

Remember that the Japanese schools have been deliberately training children in blind obedience to the National God for two generations. In the case of the Nazis, there is some evidence that perpetration of brutalities in obedience to orders is driving some of them into one degree or another of insanity. That is the belief of a Swedish journalist, long resident in Berlin, Arvid Fredborg, whose book, *Behind the Steel Wall*, has attracted much attention in his own country. He says that S.S. men are gradually trained to cruelty. They have to round up Jews for forced labour before they take part in executions. Many, he says, refuse, and are either shot or sent home. Others suffer from nervous breakdowns and may have to be sent to asylums. "Time and again" (I am quoting from an extract in *Jewish Comment*) "doctors have had to be summoned to soldiers on leave, who have suffered attacks of hysteria, sleeplessness or delirium tremens (men in firing squads are constantly intoxicated). 'I can't stand it any longer—I only see blood in my sleep,' said one young Austrian to his doctor." So the immense neurosis the Nazis have caused—and suffered—spreads among their own people.

Bernard Shaw's letter in Tuesday's *Times* shows that he can still make us laugh. The very rich often talk as if the sliding-scale of surtax left them poorer than other people, and Shaw exposed this argument in a *reductio ad absurdum*. "My haunting dread is that some of my many admirers, by dying and leaving me a million or so, may consign me to an almshouse." Almost incredulously, I realised that this was not ironic. Yet if Mr. Shaw received a million, nobody could force him to hoard it, and if he puts his present expectation of life at fifty years, this would give him an extra £20,000 a year free of tax till his death. Why should he not *spend* his money *now* during his life on the causes he has advocated for so many years? If, however, he is really so Victorian as to consider capital sacred, he could invest it, and be further from the almshouse than he now is by twenty thousand sixpences a year. The other main argument in his letter was equally unreal and much less comic. He maintains that we ought to support as rulers of Europe quislings like Darlan, because their lack of principle would make them after victory our most trustworthy supporters. Has it not occurred to Mr. Shaw that there is no surer way of getting ourselves hated than to impose such rulers? For a government must be bad if its members are utterly despised by their compatriots. Mr. Shaw has forgotten that his chosen instruments would soon suffer the fate of Darlan.

* * *

Answering Tom Driberg in the House of Commons on Tuesday, Sir James Grigg promised to investigate evidence of various allegations made against Amgot, some of which have appeared in this journal. It is extraordinary that the defence of Amgot is so often an irrelevant account of its undoubtedly fine work in clearing up the ruins of war, restoring water supplies, transport, and so on. The inference is supposed to be that military government has no time for democracy or fal-lals of that sort. In all this Lord Rodd and others who resent criticism simply miss the point. In any occupied country—Italy is to be a model for the rest—people of that country are in fact put into positions of authority by Amgot. That is inevitable. The chief criticism is that the wrong people are often given authority because many of the administrative officers of Amgot have no positive desire to encourage democracy. Without such a positive policy, they inevitably do the opposite. I should say from what I hear first-hand that this criticism is much more relevant to officers who come up from the base than to Amgot officers attached to forward units.

* * *

Friends tell me that Montagu Norman, now happily recovering from a serious illness, is not likely much longer to remain our financial dictator. His career is the most remarkable proof of the influence of "character" in the government of this country. Nobody ever doubted Mr. Norman's honesty or tenacity, and few who came into contact with him ever questioned his natural right to command. When experts were emphatic that he was wrong, he had only to appear before a Cabinet committee to reverse their decisions. Before the Macmillan Committee he cut an extraordinary figure. He thought it enough, like royalty, to assert his policy; cross-examination revealed that he understood nothing of the world implications of what he was doing. Indeed, he seemed innocent of any capacity to understand the theory of money and banking. He was just a man of character, who exercised a magnetic influence over other people. Mr. Boothby has a striking comment on this ascendancy in his recently published book, *The New Economy* (Secker and Warburg, 6*s*.).

> In every major aspect of his policy, Mr. Norman has proved to be wrong. He was wrong over the American debt settlement. He was wrong in returning to the gold standard. He was wrong in clinging to gold at an untenable parity of exchange. He was wrong in giving his support to a policy of industrial restriction at home. He was most fatally wrong in allowing money to be poured into Germany during the "'twenties," and in giving financial support to the Nazi Government during the "'thirties." Whenever I think of him I am reminded of the farewell bade to the late Lord Fisher by his coxswain: "Well, good-bye, Sir: forty years in your employ, and never did right yet." One of the most formidable of contemporary statesmen wrote to me in 1932: "Surely it will become a public necessity to get rid of Montagu Norman. No man has ever been stultified as he has been in his fourteen years' policy." It was a public necessity. But it could not be done, because Mr. Norman is, literally, a private institution.

To-day most informed persons of all political parties would agree with this verdict. The question remains to be answered why Montagu Norman was an institution in himself.

* * *

A friend, visiting his old university, writes to me as follows: "Oxford grows increasingly unlike Oxford. Arriving there in rain and darkness, I looked for a taxi. There was none. I walked to the bus stop where a long line of men were queueing up in the rain. After waiting for ten minutes or so, I asked my neighbour in the queue whether the bus for which we were waiting went up The High.

"The High," he replied, "I dunno. Dunno where it is. We're all going to the Works."

"Works?" I asked. "What Works?"

He looked at me in surprise. "The Blank Works, of course," he said. "You a stranger to Oxford?"

I can vouch for this at first hand, but it was at second hand that I heard (from a don's wife) an account of sitting in a bus and hearing two ladies discuss the difficulties of Oxford life, the crowds, the queues, the shortages and so on. "And, then, as if things weren't bad enough," said one of them, "what do they do but go and dump a University down here."

I told the don's wife quite frankly that I did not believe this.

* * *

They tell this story about the visit of an R.A.F. pilot to an aircraft factory. As he was taken round the benches he stopped to talk to an old worker. The worker complained about excessive hours. The pilot asked him how long he worked. "Ten to twelve hours a day," he said. What was he paid for that? "About fifteen pounds a week," he said. "Well," said the pilot, "I only get eight pounds a week, and I fly the planes." "Yes," came the reply. "But I have to work through Alerts."

Critic

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to R. A. W. Jarrett.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

"When his wife heard of this present," said Mr.——, "she threatened to put her head into the gas oven. She had actually put a shilling into the slot meter and a pillow in the oven when the siren sounded and they went to an air-raid shelter."—News Item.

On the Wednesday before Christmas a party of between thirty and forty C.O.s and friends, many of whom had themselves been in prison, sang carols outside Wormwood Scrubs prison . . . In deference to the vegetarians present the verse of Good King Wenceslas beginning "Bring me flesh and bring me wine," was omitted. —*Bulletin of Central Board for Conscientious Objectors.*

When the priest, Father T. C. Swarbrick, put the usual question to the bride, he put in Sir Cuthbert's title; "Do you take this man, Sir Cuthbert, to be your lawful wedded husband?" Asked afterwards whose idea it was to put the title in, Father Swarbrick replied: "It was my idea. I thought it would please Sir Cuthbert."—*Daily Mirror.*

The future of fox hunting and the future of all was in the success of the landing made and the early submission of our enemies.—*Wolverton Express and Bucks Weekly News.*

SOCIALISM IN CANADA

[From a Correspondent in Ontario]

Two years or so ago the New Statesman and Nation published an article entitled "Canada: a Tory Dominion." The picture presented by that article remains essentially true. Administrative policy is largely determined by control boards exclusively representing industry and finance; for the rest the Government is subservient to its anti-conscription following in Quebec, is guided by its supporters in the ranks of monopoly, and commands an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons. Enough, however, has occurred in the present year to suggest that the picture may be very different in the near future.

The new developments relate above all to the progress of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, or C.C.F. This is a Socialist party which, organised in 1932, had not, before the war, made any considerable impression upon the electorate. In September 1939 this party had six representatives in a House of Commons of 245 Members, and a few spokesmen in the legislatures of three of the nine provinces. To-day it has representatives at Ottawa from five provinces, and in the legislatures of six, in three of which it is the official Opposition. The number of its representatives in all these bodies has more than doubled. Of the incidents in this advance much the most important has been the general election in Ontario, held on August 4th last. The electors returned thirty-four C.C.F. candidates. For the first time the party broke the ice of reaction in eastern Canada. In the last legislature it had no Members at all. It is now, overnight, the official Opposition.

The potential importance of these results is all the greater in view of the prospect of a Federal general election next spring. It is generally believed that Mr. Mackenzie King would have sprung a Federal general election this autumn had the Liberals been re-elected in Ontario. That prospect has vanished. But the general election is still near enough for the question to be asked: Will the C.C.F., now that it has become a power in the greatest province of the country, really advance the cause of Socialism?

The prestige of the small group of C.C.F. members at Ottawa has always been high. The movement suffered a temporary set-back at the beginning of the war as a result of its then policy of limited participation. But with the ousting of Chamberlain and the accession of members of the Labour Party to positions of power at Westminster its attitude changed, and it has won deserved credit for its logical and forceful presentation, since then, of a democratic total-war policy, its defence of civil liberties against improper encroachment, and its exposure of the inefficiency and not unfrequent scandals which characterise big-business control of our war effort. The experience of the depression years, and other considerations, have brought growing numbers of people to the conviction that there is no significant difference between the Liberal and Conservative Parties. Indeed, a widely read Conservative publicist wrote, just before the war, that the difference between them amounted to one-half of one per cent. in the average tariff on imports. Dissatisfaction with one of the old parties is thus far less likely than before to rally support to the other. Last December the Conservatives had decided to style themselves "Progressive Conservatives" without taint of the Radicalism associated with a Socialist movement, and this had great weight in a province traditionally Conservative. Yet, in spite of all, the Conservative vote last August was only slightly larger than that of the C.C.F., and less by one-third than the support it received in 1937, when it was not so much defeated as overwhelmed by the Liberals. The C.C.F. vote, on the other hand, increased 400 per cent.

The Ontario C.C.F. leaders professed to be out for power, a result which would have been less fortunate for the nation-wide movement than the position actually won. Not only have none of the newly elected Members any experience of the legislature or of administration. What is more important is that the election programme was somewhat too ambitious alike on financial and on constitutional grounds. The powers of the provinces in peacetime are considerable, though limited at various points by the British North America Act. (In particular, they include no control over banking or currency.) Wartime exigencies have limited them still further: they have temporarily resigned their power to tax incomes, while the Federal Government's new controls over man-power, external trade, and foreign exchange could easily be employed to hamstring any radical attempts to change the present system. Even a partial failure in Ontario to carry out a progressive C.C.F. programme would operate to prejudice, perhaps to kill, the progress of Socialism in the national arena. For it is there and there only that the issue can be decided. Not only has the Federal Government essential powers which have never been possessed by the provinces, but it could automatically secure amendments to the British North America Act which would transfer to it from the provinces certain other powers which it has not. National control of marketing and labour regulation, to take two instances, are necessary prerequisites of effective Socialism. Every effort, then, must be made to avoid anything which would lessen the chances of the National Party being elected to office at Ottawa—or, rather, to power, for M. J. Coldwell, the national leader, has publicly stated that the party will not accept office without power.

As things are, the Ontario C.C.F., as His Majesty's Opposition at Toronto, will occupy a position not only responsible and educative, but even easy. It is quite unlikely that its members will make any serious mistakes. They will add immeasurably to the intellectual quality of the Legislature's debates. Newspaper reports of the proceedings will give the whole national movement free and vote-winning publicity from ocean to ocean. The Federal general election can scarcely be called for any date earlier than late in March. By that time the Ontario session will probably be over, and the growing prestige of the C.C.F. will be even greater than it is now.

A brief glance at progress in other provinces will not be amiss at this point. In the Maritimes, work has only recently begun in the comparatively unimportant provinces of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island; in Nova Scotia a very promising beginning has been made: there are already four Members in the provincial House and one at Ottawa. In Quebec, prospects have been lately much improved by a declaration of the Roman Catholic hierarchy which is generally interpreted as permitting the faithful to vote for the C.C.F. In Manitoba, the party is recovering from the effects of an ill-advised coalition with an old-party Government, and is now very definitely on the march: several recent by-elections have been won, including two for seats at Ottawa. Saskatchewan has always hitherto been the chief centre of C.C.F. support. It sends the largest contingent of Members, including the national leader, to Ottawa; it forms the official opposition in the provincial legislature. In Alberta, the C.C.F. was born eleven years ago. Along with the old-line parties it was engulfed in the Social Credit mist which swept over the province in the middle 'Thirties. Time is now dissipating the illusion, and the only recent by-election resulted in a victory for the C.C.F. In British Columbia, where the movement is especially militant and most obviously Socialist, it already supplies the official Opposition, and has forced a coalition of Liberals and Conservatives.

Thus it seems certain that the C.C.F. will bulk very much larger in Canadian politics in the near future; a great many people, outside it as well as within it, expect it to be charged with the government of the country at the next general election or, at latest, the election next after that. The all-important question thus emerges: Will it, in these circumstances, prove to be just another Social-Democratic Party? Will it become merely a reformist accomplice of Capitalism, and thereby follow so many of its predecessors in selling progress down the river? Or will it have the vision and the courage to assert principles and carry out the policies for which it professes to stand?

For practical purposes these questions would seem at the moment to resolve themselves into another: Will the C.C.F. become a trade-union dominated party? It is enough to recall that trade unions are the creation, not of Socialist thinking, but of the industrial conditions and the acquisitive aims that are normal in capitalist society anywhere, and that where they have been influential in politics they have nearly always failed to live up to the hopes that they have inspired. The record, in fine, does not entitle one to expect Socialism from any Socialist Party in which the unions predominate.

In Ontario and in the national field tendencies to "soft-pedal" have not been unknown. Ontario is the chief industrial province, and Labour organisation has proceeded farther there than elsewhere. It was inevitable, and quite proper, that the C.C.F. in it should be more a Labour than a Farmer or other party. Early in 1942 individual local unions began to affiliate with the organisation. Those who desire preferential treatment of affiliated union members seem to be chiefly influenced by the need to make the C.C.F. a mass movement, coupled with a belief that the only way to effect this is to enlist for it wide support among the unions and by the still more obvious need of the party for a minimum adequate income.

The party is likely to be called to power at Ottawa either next year or at the general election next following. At either of these dates it is fairly certain to be still a Socialist Party, and to have retained allegiance to its fundamental policies, and to be still bound to implement them as soon as it is given the opportunity. The C.C.F. came into being as a fusion of Farmer and Labour groups in the West, with the former element then predominating. With "intellectual" leadership they framed a policy that was Socialist except in regard to ownership of individually operated farms. The educated support of the party is still mainly in the West, which will undoubtedly send to Ottawa after the next election a greatly increased representation of the rural constituencies. Farmer, Labour, and middle-class will come together on the only basis—the Socialist basis—upon which their varied needs can be satisfied.

HUNGER*

I come among the peoples like a shadow.
I sit down by each man's side.

None sees me, but they look on one another,
And know that I am there.

My silence is like the silence of the tide
That buries the playground of children;

Like the deepening frost in the slow night,
When birds are dead in the morning.

Armies trample, invade, destroy,
With guns roaring from earth and air.

I am more terrible than armies.
I am more feared than the cannon.

Kings and chancellors give commands;
I give no command to any;

But I am listened to more than kings
And more than passionate orators.

I unswear words and undo deeds.
Naked things know me.

I am first and last to be felt of the living,
I am Hunger.

Laurence Binyon

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* *This poem, published originally in a collection o Binyon's poetry called "The New World," was quote in a review in the "Nation" of December 14th, 1918 when food conditions on the Continent were similar t those of to-day. We reprint it by permission of Mr Binyon and the Society of Authors.*

GIBRALTAR GUIDE

In this war despite the confident predictions of an attack upon the Rock that were made before 1939, Malta has stolen Gibraltar's thunder. And yet the trials of the Gibraltarians have been almost as hard to bear. Their women and children form the largest colonial community ever to come to Britain; a more fortunate minority of 1,500 proceeded to Jamaica where they can still enjoy the sun: but both groups have for four years been parted from their menfolk, 6,000 of whom remained to work in the dockyards with Spanish labourers. That is not the end of the story. The *Times* has thought it necessary to investigate the plight of the 12,000 who reached England: its allegations of overcrowding and unsympathetic treatment have been officially denied by the Ministry of Health, who are responsible for the thirty odd reception centres scattered around London. A great deal has indeed been done. But only a few weeks ago two colonial leaders, Gustav Bellotti and Salvador Holliday, whom the Ministry had tried to evict, won a case of trespass in the courts. They had insisted on taking their midday meal in their own rooms; for there alone they could have them hot, and eat them privately. And the judge, in finding for them, remarked on the lack of imagination of which they, and the others, had been victims.

Now no one denies the difficulty of the Ministry's task. Many of the Gibraltarians cannot speak English, and their habits are Mediterranean rather than Anglo-Saxon. But the trouble goes deeper than that. After all, we must have known all about the people of Gibraltar long before they came, and could have made allowances accordingly. Or did we? Gibraltar for so many is just a symbol of imperial might, a profile as famous and unknown as any film star's. The trouble may lie even deeper than that general ignorance. Perhaps an account of Gibraltar seen not as a Rock, but as a collection of people mirrored in the directory of the Colony, may be enlightening.

In the year 1927, the date of the directory I use, Neville Chamberlain was Minister of Health; and he, instead of Ernest Brown, might have lost the case against Salvador Holliday. For the situation in our colonies does not change as rapidly as all that: the date is not near enough to affect the exiles of to-day, nor too distant to be irrelevant. Then, as now, most of the streets in Gibraltar had two groups of names: La Calera, or Crutchett's or Portuguese Town: the Plaza de la Verdura, Cornwall's Parade: the Callejon de Dolores Corbe, Lime Kiln Road. Then, as now, it is eight miles and seven furlongs from the Governor's house to the Duke of Kent's Farm (Cortijon de la Fajonera). Matter of fact Anglo-Saxony against sonorous Hispanity with its romantic overtones: perhaps our nearest verbal approach was the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes, whose provincial grand master had his quarters in the detention barracks.

One need not dwell too long on this distinction; after all, and with reason, the English have been in Gibraltar longer than the Spaniards, who took it from the Moors. English culture has made inroads into the Mediterranean culture of the people. There were dog licences at 2*s*. a year that year in Gibraltar. There was a branch of the R.S.P.C.A. There was the needlework guild—and the executive and city councils. Four Catholic churches, including the Cathedral of St. Mary the Crowned, are only remnants of the eighteen [according to Father Jerome of the Conception] at the time the 12th siege gave the place to England. In 1926 they face Holy Trinity (C. of E.) and two chapels, the Presbyterian St. Andrews under the Rev. I. Brown-Smith, and four synagogues. As for secular culture, the first cricket club was founded in 1858, and other games followed to permeate the Garrison and then the town. The Garrison library indeed became affiliated to the United Sports Club. "Fox-hunting, so dear to Britishers, is here maintained in its fullest integrity," as students of the civil war may know, while youth was served by the Boy Scouts, including the 1st Gibraltar Troop (the Marquis of Milford Haven's Own); and those children who were educated by Mr. Edward Martin of "Bringhurst" may have sat for the Cambridge Local. Many, of course, were not.

Enough has been said to show the pattern of formal life in the fortress; after all, we know it all at home: it is only sharper and narrower in focus, as in most other colonies. And it will not come as a surprise to find that the splendid rhodomontade of the Royal Minnesingers' Society (founded in 1886 to provide smoking concerts) had sunk by 1926 to a performance by the Gibraltar Choral and Operatic Society of *Miss Hook of Holland* before the Governor. But surely all this is of a piece with the worried organisers of the Ministry of Health; with their undoubted sincerity, their reliance upon the Gibraltar Government, and above all, their comparative failure in sympathetic imagination?

Here, no doubt, someone will ask, "Well, what alternative is there between Spain and Britain? Is there anything we can do?" I suggest that we may best find the answer by taking up another attitude. Consider the people of Gibraltar—not British and Spaniards only, but Italians, Levantines, Indians: almost every people on the route to India, gathered at its gateway. Consider the shops, most of whose signs are still hanging in the streets: Hamido Amchut with his Depot of Eggs and Moorish Bazaar; Mrs. R. Trinidad, the art photographer; Wadhoomal Essardass with his fancy silks; Sanguinetti, sole agent for Columbia records; and the bookshop of Laurence O'Reilly. Or consider the chronicle for 1926; not the familiar, arid, official year, with its list of eight colonial laws—oil in territorial waters, aliens order extension, and the rest—but the life of the people, as detailed by Benedict Miles, the directory's editor-owner. It was the year of the general strike in Britain, and the stoppage in South Wales told on a coaling station like Gibraltar. On January 23rd one reads. "Public meeting at Commercial Square organised by Workmen's Union and Exchange Committee, at which it was decided to memorialise the Secretary of State to the effect that the Rent Restriction Ordinance should be re-enacted in Gibraltar." (N.B.—The reply received was in the negative.) Though the Suffolk Regiment wore red and yellow roses in their caps for the King's Birthday on June 3rd, the year soon turns to November 6th, when the soup kitchen was opened for the winter season. And the accounts of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul disclosed that 322 families in that tiny community were being maintained by that one organisation alone.

But the biggest space in the calendar is given to the "unusual behaviour" of the Spanish customs officials in July, when "ladies and gentlemen . . . proceeding to La Linea Fair were submitted to a most objectionable form of searching, even used boxes of matches being taken away." The alcalde apologised, but his underlings did not "alter their demeanour," nor did the Gibraltarians "conceal their vexation." The Spanish Commandant visited the town and a demonstration took place against him. "The police had advised (him) to leave Gibraltar by the side streets, but he ignored their advice, and this gave rise to an unpleasant scene which happily is of the rarest occurrence among the law-abiding citizens of Gibraltar." Next day the whole colony, as protest, went to Catalan Bay rather than to La Linea, and a carabineer, unwise enough to enter the town, was "very unreasonably" hit by an "excited individual," who was subsequently fined.

Now this hot season incident may seem very trivial beside the troubles of the Ministry of Health, and the imperial destinies of nations. But it is life; and someone might have remembered it in 1940, or at least in 1943. And life on the Rock is very old; at the foot of its limestone recesses Miss Garrod discovered in that year, seventeen years ago, parts of a skull which must have lain buried for 20,000 years. Dante wrote, as the directory records,

When we came
To the strait pass where Hercules ordain'd
The boundaries not to be o'erstepped by man

and this has for us its own application. For the Rock of Gibraltar stands between Britain and Spain, which some take to be the two poles of our dilemma. The years roll back, and we are restored to savagery and rhetoric; an English soldier is sentenced to a thousand strokes, a suicide (and there were many) is hung by the heels and his body thrown over the Line Wall "like a dog or cat." The years roll forward; and dog licences are collected, *Miss Hook of Holland* is performed, and the Gibraltar exiles fail to get hot meals at noon. Only the future is obscure. But there is still hope; because the citizens of Gibraltar can stand up for their rights in London, and win their case against the Ministry, even though, it may be, only on a point of law.

Henry Swanzy

ON AUSTERITY

Many people have commented in recent years on the English genius for understatement. It seems to me, however, that the English have also a genius for overstatement. As proof of this I rely on the single instance of their wartime use of the word "austerity." Not even Goering when he warned the Germans to be austere in their attitude to butter can have dreamed that a great nation would one day regard it as a mark of austerity to wear a pair of trousers with no turn-ups or a waistcoat gashed with fewer than four pockets. After all, the dandies of the Temple and Gray's Inn have been wearing trousers with no turn-ups for years with no sense of hardship; and dukes and marquises lived luxuriously in ages when there were no waistcoats with four pockets and, indeed, when there were no waistcoats at all.

Why, then, did the modern Englishman, in the middle of a world catastrophe, decide to regard himself as a particular victim of fate because he was no longer able to buy turned-up trousers? There were so many other things that made his life poorer—restaurants in which the food was with luck just eatable, deprivation of careless holidays, the disappearance of bananas, worse and worse and dearer and dearer cigarettes, the end of the motor car as an instrument of pleasure, the absence of light in the streets, the prohibition of the recklessly and rightly used coal scuttle. All these things brought austerity into our lives. Yet, by an extraordinary misuse of language, the use of the word "austerity" has been reserved by the Government and the press for the supposed sufferings now to be abolished of men in not being allowed to buy turned-up trousers.

I looked up the word "austerity" in the dictionary because I had been told that it was derived from "Auster," the south wind, said to be obnoxious at certain times of the year to the Romans. The Oxford Dictionary does not support this derivation. On the contrary, it relates "austere" to the Greek word "austeros," meaning "making the tongue dry and rough, *hence* harsh, severe." Gradually it came to mean "severe in self-discipline or self-restraint, stringently moral, strict, abstinent." But can I be called severe in self-discipline or strictly moral merely because I wear a waistcoat with fewer than four pockets? Not according to any standards that I was brought up in. The strictly moral man of my childhood had to give his mind to more important things than the number of his waistcoat pockets. Austerity in those days was not always so extreme as that referred to in Macaulay's sentence: "To these austere fanatics a holiday was an object of positive disgust." But it was above tailoring matters. An austere man was a man who frowned on half the pleasures of life and tried to blight these pleasures for others from the highest possible motives.

Not that the Puritans among whom I grew up were pleasure-haters. Certainly they were lovers of the heaped table—not gluttons, but lavish with jams to the young, royal offerers of second and even third helpings, making up with cakes for what their households lacked in ale. Sunday, no doubt, was an austere day. Even the habitués of the Sunday public houses threatened to go out—after the morning closing time—and create a riot if any attempt were made to introduce band-music into the chief park of the city on the Sabbath day. In one public house one Sunday the very bona-fide travellers marched out as one man to beat up two teams who were breaking the Sabbath by playing a game of hurling. It will be seen from this that the conception of austerity differs considerably even among Puritans. The Sabbatarian drinker is austere in one way, the Sabbatarian teetotaller in another. The austerity of some elders forbade the theatre, but not the circus. The austerity of others more logically forbade even the circus. But there were nearly always loopholes of escape. The normal Puritan of the nineteenth century was seldom a Mr. Murdstone. Abundance of food, abundance of amusements, abundance of holidays, abundance of company young and old—these, it seems to me, were among the chief characteristics of the austerities of Puritanism.

Still, even then one heard of semi-Mr. Murdstones—men who reproved their children if they came down unpunctually to the eight o'clock breakfast, men who did not believe it was right for children to have both jam and butter on the same slice of bread, men who tried to compel their children to work at school. They were of the type of the austere man in the parable of the talents who so terrified the most nervous of his three servants that he could think of nothing to do with his talent but to hide it in a napkin. I do not think the case for the man with the single talent has ever been fairly stated. Read the story in St. Luke and you will see that he was simply a victim of austerity suffering from inhibitions.

To-day austerity comes to us not as a harsh master, but as a gentle and benevolent companion. Never were such hardships imposed on a community with so little sign of bullying. It may be an iron hand that withholds our olive oil, but it wears a velvet glove. It is strange to live in a world without cream, but there is no malice in the prohibition. The lemon has become a fruit of the kind that Dr. Faustus dreamed of, but its absence causes no resentment even among fanatical believers in the lemon cure. There was a time when the City man would have thought himself harshly treated if he had not been able to go into any restaurant and be sure of getting a chop or a steak for lunch. To-day, with no face of bitterness, he will sit down to a plate of minced veal. There was a time when I should have thought I was being austere if I ate cod: now, cod seems to me to be second cousin to the Dover sole. All our standards of austerity have collapsed. I find myself acquiring a taste for cabbage. Gourmets may dream of their seven-course dinners; give me a slice or two of spam, with a few pickles to hide the flavour, and a boiled pudding, and I do not complain.

A new form of austerity threatens wartime Britain in the suggestion that the use of table-cloths and napkins should be forbidden in hotels and restaurants. The manager of one of the great hotels summed up his objections to the proposal in the pithy sentence: "It would be bad for morale." Strange that austerity, which the ancient Stoics thought to be the very foundation of strength of character, should now be regarded as a force that undermines it. One can see Colonel Blimp's faith in the future of his country sagging as, for the first time in his life, he sits down to dinner without a napkin on his knees. "First, trousers without turn-ups. Now, no table napkins. What next, I wonder? This is a victory for Hitler." Yet outside the West End good men—men of strong fibre—have preserved their character in the past in surroundings naked of table-linen. When I came to London first, I sometimes dined in eating-houses which announced "Roast beef and two veg. 6d." and "Everything as nice as mother makes it"; and we were not given even salt spoons at table. We dug out the salt from the cellar with the point of the knife. Yet I never noticed any signs of failure of morale on the part of my fellow diners. They seemed morally as sound as members of the House of Lords. Perhaps austerity does not undermine your morale if you do not know you are being austere.

The word "austerity," indeed, has a mainly relative meaning. There were medieval saints who felt that they were being austere in not taking a bath. There have been modern boys who felt that they were being austere in taking a bath. Even church-going, which is a luxury to those who like it, is a form of austerity to those who go against their will. Dinner-parties, which give pleasure to most people, are a penance to others. Children even—though not many of them—differ as to whether tapioca-pudding is a diet of austerity or not. To me fresh air is a luxury: to my neighbour it is harsher than the chill of a monastic cell.

I suggest then that "austerity" is rather an absurd word to use for any of the restrictions that have been imposed on us since the beginning of the war. Those who grumble are gross exaggerators of minor troubles—like the Belfast second-hand furniture dealer who, finding himself marooned in a Dublin hotel by the insurrection of 1916, wrote in his diary on the third day: "No butter for breakfast again to-day. How long, O Lord, how long!" The fact is, the small rather than the large amount of austerity that has become part of our lives is the surprising characteristic of England in wartime. A nation whose face falls at the thought of having to wear trousers without turn-ups or of having to dine in restaurants without table napkins cannot have much to grumble about. Let us hope that we shall not have something more worth grumbling about later on. If we do, however, I cannot help thinking that we shall grumble less.

Y. Y.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"The Cradle Song," at the Apollo

This convent play by Sierra—as one might guess from the very mixed notices it receives—has sweetness without depth. One happening in each of the two acts throws a stone into a quiet pool and spreads ripples: in the first act it is a baby dumped at the gate and adopted by the nuns; in the second, eighteen years later, the grown-up girl is leaving the convent to get married. Nothing more happens and it is only a faintly agitated surface that is presented to us. Without depth, perhaps, this portrayal of community life, but that isn't to say without subtlety. The sentiment—of which, for some palates, there is obviously too much—is nicely balanced by irony: so nicely that a West End audience, which takes to the extremes of silence or the guffaw, found itself sometimes at a loss. That is not the fault of the play and, only in part, of Mr. Gielgud's production. It is very good to look at; decor and grouping are elegant, and this elegance extends to the dresses and attitudes of the nuns. The Schiaparellian poses are shivered whenever Miss Wendy Hiller opens her mouth or Miss Muriel Aked gruffly finds fault: the whole texture, in fact, is wrong for the particular effects the playwright is aiming at. However, the production at the Apollo has many virtues. Besides Miss Aked, who at the end achieves an emotion that others had missed, there is an admirable and moving performance by Miss Lilly Kann as the Mother Prioress. In fact, she was the only one who seemed completely and at all times at home.

"The Druid's Rest," at the St. Martin's

A sense of the theatre is apparently no more related to general intelligence than is skill at chess or at throwing the caber. To be a good dramatist you need both gifts, and that is why good dramatists are always so rare, far rarer than good novelists. Collaboration seems to offer a method of overcoming the difficulty, but the man who can use the dramatic form seems usually unaware of his deficiencies. His plays, however empty, start with a good run, and he does not realise, that if he got some intellectual help, they might like Shaw's, be continually revived. We are not suggesting that Mr. Emlyn Williams lacks intelligence—*The Corn is Green* is proof to the contrary. But in his more recent plays he has been content to rely only on his sense of the stage. *The Druid's Rest* has a lively first act, because he is brilliant at outlining a character and presenting a situation. But the play goes on and on without deviating into the unexpected or ingenious, and at the end one feels merely "They order these matters better in Dublin." The Welsh local colour is enjoyable, the portrait of the over-imaginative little boy convincing and authentic. But the peer is a deadly bore, even when he is not reciting his miserable verses, and mistaken identity is not the freshest of themes. Most of the actors are excellent, notably Brynmor Thomas, Nuna Davey and Roddy Hughes. In a wretched part Richard Burton showed exceptional ability.

Correspondence

FRONTIERS AND PEOPLES

SIR,—In his letter of May 22nd, 1919, to the Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George, criticising the Versailles Treaty, General Smuts made the following observations about Poland's frontiers:

> I am convinced that in the undue enlargement of Poland we are not only reversing the verdict of history, but committing a cardinal error in policy which history will yet avenge. The new Poland will include millions of Germans (and Russians) and territories which have a German (or Russian) population, or which have for very long periods been part of Germany (or Russia). It is reasonably certain that both Germany and Russia will again be great Powers, and that, sandwiched between them the new Poland could only be a success with their good will. How, under these circumstances, can we expect Poland to be other than a failure? . .
>
> Even now while the Conference is sitting, the Poles are defying the Great Powers. What is going to happen in future with the Great Powers divided and at loggerheads? I think we are building a house of sand.

General Smuts concluded that "the enlargement of Poland beyond anything which we had contemplated during the war" was a cardinal error in policy "full of menace for the future peace of Europe," and that every means should be taken to remove this error before it was too late.

The Allies told the Poles they could not have East Galicia unless they gave it political autonomy. A Polish Army under General Haller "jumped the claim" by occupying the territory. East Galicia never got autonomy, and the Ukrainian peasants were mostly at loggerheads with their Polish landlords and Polish officialdom. There were conflicts, bloody reprisals, widespread disaffection, and severe persecution of Ukrainian nationalism.

The Allies warned the Poles not to take the territories beyond the Curzon line, since they were inhabited mostly by White Russian peasants, and told them if they did, the responsibility would be exclusively theirs. These territories were nevertheless taken—by war. The Polish claim to Vilna town and territory was also "jumped" by the Polish General Zeligowski, who organised a military *coup*.

These things were done at the instigation of the Polish Junkers—that is the semi-feudal landowners—who subsequently played about the same part in destroying Polish democracy and promoting Polish militarism and authoritarian government as did their class brethren in Germany.

They also pushed Poland into the suicidal foreign policy of repudiating the collective system, attempting to be a great Power, and trying to play a local balance of power game between Germany and the U.S.S.R.

This policy was disastrous to Poland, and a factor in bringing on the present world war.

Must we listen to those Polish emigres who want the Allies to let them do all this again?

A SOCIALIST

SIR,—In his article "Reflections on Frontiers," Mr. H. N. Brailsford, referring to the unsatisfactory state of the Russo-Polish frontier dispute, says:

" Maps are not our affair." Certainly they are still less the present writer's affair. But the issue concerned derives from a somewhat deeper lying root than the fact, that, as Mr. Brailsford puts it (apologetically), "the younger generation in Germany went astray between the two World Wars, because when it looked around, it saw that it lived in a jungle." First, the younger German generation, if it lived in a jungle, lived in the same one in which the French, the Czechoslovak, the Norwegian young generation lived, in brief: the Continental jungle. Secondly, as all of us know, " the younger German generation looked around " solely for the purpose of easy loot and prey. Yet, they did not so exclusively because they were " butcher-birds." The German population, settling on comparatively very poor soil, is putting forward not only the economic claim of the highest possible living standard, but the political claim of dominating the whole of the Continent, especially its Eastern parts.

Since decades, the German idea has been, that the comparatively under-populated areas of Western Russia and of the Ukraine must make good for that appalling Continental situation. In itself, the German plan may have had some prospects of success if pursued with a peaceful mind and with arguments of international social justice. But, after what has really happened—and for what not one, but three " younger German generations " had been prepared and had emerged for the task, in spite of the " jungle," physically remarkably fit—the solution may well be found the other way round. Mr. Brailsford, astonishingly sentimental for a senior Socialist, Sociologist, complains about a prospect of perhaps seven to eight million Germans being uprooted and condemned to unemployment by Poland's and Czechoslovakia's territorial claims on Germany. About unemployment, Mr. Brailsford need not worry. Russia will employ them all right in reconstruction work. And as far as the problem of exchange of populations is concerned, a prospect on which Mr. Brailsford looks with utter dislike, here probably that perverted element of truth which is contained in so many Nazi allegations, will revert itself to normality and adapt itself to the necessities of life. Whilst Germany had planned to send at least some thirty million Russians and Ukrainians to the Asiatic parts of U.S.S.R., thus freeing land for German, and even perhaps for non-German settlers, it will factually probably turn out the other way round, namely, easing the colossal pressure on overcrowded Europe by transferring some millions of Germans to Russia.

Mr. Brailsford invokes the Atlantic Charter and he deplores its violation by Stalin's offer of East Prussia to the Poles. Good Lord and little fishes !—the Atlantic Charter ! This document, which came as a somewhat stavistic and liberalistic surprise to a cynical world, was drawn up nearly four years ago, and if its amazing contents have been meant seriously that was certainly only the case if its principles could have been accepted by Germany. But does Mr. Brailsford regard the present set-up of peoples and populations, of States and communities, of industries and raw material distribution, as world history's last word ? There have been the great migration of peoples more than one thousand years ago. Where is it said that such an event will not recur ? FREDERICK JELLINEK

705 Carrington House,
Hertford Street, W.1.

[Mr. Brailsford writes in reply : " Certainly all the young manhood of Europe grew up in a jungle but with this difference : up to 1935 the Germans in it were the under-dogs. Mass transfers of population are to my thinking an abomination. They record a defeat for civilisation : two races have failed to live together. They are also the extremest affirmation of nationalism. Voluntary migration is another matter. This should be regulated and even fostered in the interests of the migrants. What Mr. Jellinek has in view is, apparently, migration at the bayonet's point, with vengeance as the driving force. Against this prehistoric brutality, I think the nineteenth-century liberalism of the Charter a valuable bulwark."—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

EDUCATION BILL

SIR,—The eloquent plea for toleration advanced by the Head of Westminster City School gains yet more force in the light of certain words in the Education Bill itself (Clause 28) :

> The Governors of an Aided School may dismiss a teacher from the School without the consent of the local education authority *for reasons relating to the religious instruction in the School.*

The italics are mine. Is it unreasonable to feel some alarm at this juicy language ? Such vague and comprehensive powers make a mockery of the name of freedom. Not even a right of appeal is given to the teacher, whose dismissal may in fact be a mere act of tyranny. R. MCARTHUR,

Parmiter's School, E.2. Headmaster

THE CASE OF SURESH VAIDYA

SIR,—Before this letter appears a young Indian journalist, Suresh Vaidya, will probably have faced a court martial for failure to report on receiving his calling-up papers. He is at present under arrest at Canterbury.

Mr. Vaidya was previously employed by the London office of the American journals, *Time* and *Life*. As an Indian, a Socialist and (like most Indian Socialists) a supporter of the All-India National Congress in its struggle for national independence, Mr. Vaidya considers it contrary to his principles to serve in the British Army. He has stated that his country was declared a belligerent without consulting the representatives of Indian public opinion, that the Congress offer to co-operate in the war on terms of equality with other independent allies was rejected, and that the treatment of India by our Government is a contradiction of its alleged war aims.

Suresh Vaidya is not a pacifist. His case is quite distinct from that of the usual " objector," and the case *against* the usual objector is utterly irrelevant in this instance. There is no question here of the obligations of democracy, and there are no nice points regarding the limits of the demands that the community can make upon the individual. The ethical question involved is simply as to whether a member of a subject nation should be compelled to defend by force of arms a system imposed upon him, which he loathes. His community has demanded nothing from him—its opinion has never been asked, which is the basis of Mr. Vaidya's principal objection. On the other hand, the facilities offered to British pacifists are useless in this case, and Mr. Vaidya, with an unassailable argument, has found that the refusal to fight for those whom he regards as the enemies of his country is not considered a " conscientious " objection.

The case of one individual may often test the morality of a whole nation and the integrity of its standards of justice. This is not a question of the merits or demerits of British rule in India, but a plain issue—*How would you feel in the same circumstances ?* The most patriotic Englishmen, would, I imagine, be among the foremost to resist conscription by their conquerors. Unless some public sense of decency can make itself felt and demand Suresh Vaidya's release, we shall justify the worst charges of hypocrisy that Indians have made against us—and by " us " I mean Britain, not merely Whitehall.

Burghley Road, S.W.19. REGINALD REYNOLDS

COLONIAL POLICY

SIR,—Your correspondent in N. Africa whose article " Reform or Revolt " appeared in your current issue is very adamant in his criticism of French colonial policy, apparently in the belief that the British colonial's attitude is more tolerant.

I have spent some time in Rhodesia and was amazed at the filth and destitution of the natives in that part of the British Empire. Their standard of living is

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just as appalling as that of the Arabs in French N. Africa, and the British colonial's native policy is as narrow-minded as that of his French counterpart.

The blame for the subjugation of a large proportion of the world's coloured population to neo-slavery does not lie with a particular nation but with the racial arrogance and the greedy desire for cheap labour.

SERGEANT/PILOT

PAINTERS AND PURCHASERS

SIR,—With reference to Mr. Raymond Mortimer's article, "A Great Patron," no one, I am sure, has done more to encourage young painters than Mr. Mortimer himself but I agree with him that what is really wanted is a measure of practical help. Therefore, may I be allowed to put forward the following idea as a possible basis for action (always bearing in mind that the final details would need to be thrashed out by the members themselves)?

1. That a club should be formed (calling itself, I suggest, The Quick Club) with the object of buying only the works of living painters.
2. That the club's membership should be limited. (I suggest, 10 members.)
3. That the club membership fee should be 10 guineas per annum, but that, *in addition*, each member should undertake to spend 10 guineas on a work by a living painter.
4. That each year the club should elect a Chairman and that the Chairman should be given the privilege of spending 75 per cent. of the club's finances on two works.
5. That the two works bought by the Chairman should be given to established galleries (or, alternatively, that the club should build up its own collection.)
6. That once a year the club should hold a show of its members' individual purchases.

I wonder how many of us spend more than twenty guineas on less worthy causes! But the motive is not charity. There is no more exciting adventure than backing one's fancy in paint. At any rate, if any of your readers are interested in the idea and would care to write to me, perhaps we might do something about it.

HEDLEY SMART

"Beam End,"
Hockerhill, Bishop's Stortford.

"OPERA NIGHTS"

SIR,—Captain Shawe-Taylor, like other reviewers of my recent *Opera Nights*, cannot understand the principle, if any, that has determined my choice of operas; with one accord they find the selection "arbitrary," "capricious," and so on. "No Wagner!" they moan; "No Figaro, no Don Giovanni, no Otello!" etc. They keep on at me very much as Monty Bodkin, in Mr. Wodehouse's novel, kept on at Miss Butterwick on board the *Atlantic*—"Gertrude, your behaviour is inexplicable!" But Monty had a real grievance: Miss Butterwick had broken off their engagement, whereas I was under no engagement to anyone as to which operas I should write about, or the order in which I should print the essays.

Still, I can't see all these great and good men suffering like this when a word or two from me can put them out of their misery. The seemingly inexplicable is capable of the simplest of explanations.

Opera Nights is really a sequel. The operas by Wagner and a dozen other composers which it so grieves the reviewers to find me "ignoring" were treated by me in three volumes which were published some fifteen years ago in America—where there is a public for opera—but not in England. *Opera Nights*, which in the American edition bears the title of *More Stories of the Great Operas*, was commissioned by my American publisher in 1939 to complete the record. Its issue in this country was an afterthought. I am now entirely rewriting the three earlier volumes for publication over here.

I agree with Captain Shawe-Taylor that some photographs of the most recent Continental productions of certain operas would have given *Opera Nights* an added lustre. He has omitted to tell me, however, how these could have been obtained in wartime. And I really can't share his disparaging view of some of the illustrations my publisher managed with much difficulty to obtain. Why, for anyone with half an eye for the combination of the good, the true and the beautiful in opera the full-length, broadside-on picture of Tetrazzini as dear little Lakmé is alone worth the money!

ERNEST NEWMAN

HOLIDAY CAMPS

SIR,—In "Critic's" reference to the North Wales holiday camp one important point is not discussed. In his reply to Professor W. J. Gruffydd (Hansard, 19.1.44, 202), the First Lord of the Admiralty stated that the naval camp concerned was built for the Admiralty by Butlin's Ltd. for about £660,000, "and the Admiralty is under contract to sell the camp to Butlin's Ltd. within a specified period after the end of hostilities."

The Admiralty, therefore, is not content merely to acquire this beautiful piece of Wales for present war purposes, but contracts to sell it after the war on terms (which it refuses to disclose) to the firm which built it. This surely is a new development in "democratic" government?

It would be well to know (*a*) whether this contract for the disposal of the site was entered into with the approval of the Minister of Town and Country Planning, (*b*) whether other sites now occupied by the Defence Ministries will be disposed of in a similar manner, (*c*) whether the local authorities of England and Wales accept the "principle" that our land can be acquired and disposed of in this way.

"Critic" writes (in some ignorance, I fear) of Welshmen who have strong views about keeping the Sabbath. I assure him that there are still many of us, of all party colours, who have strong views about democratic freedom.

Cardiff. IORWERTH C. PEATE

SIR,—"Critic" refers in your last issue to the need for the creation of holiday camps close to our future National Park areas, but whatever else they may be, Mr. Butlin's camps are not places "for the genuine wanderer and lover of unorganised beauty." Mr. Butlin's proposal to occupy some three miles of coastline near Criccieth is a matter which will cause considerable alarm to all who know and value the Welsh countryside. The area concerned is at present quiet and unspoilt, and will almost certainly be part of the future Snowdonia National Park, and the intrusion of a large, artificial, and semi-urban camp would do considerable harm to the district. It should be stressed that this is not a mere matter of prejudice against this type of camp; Mr. Butlin's existing camps have been highly praised, and in their right environment would appear to be an admirable form of holiday facility. The Snowdonia coast is, however, definitely not the right environment; there seems to be ample room for the scheme on the North Welsh coast, where such a self-contained semi-urban community could more easily be absorbed without damage to the countryside, and from which many of the beautiful areas of North Wales would still be accessible by the motor or rail transport which are most likely to be the methods of approach favoured by Mr. Butlin's guests.

At a time when we are promised National Parks in the near future, and when our coastline is being surveyed preparatory to its adequate planning, such a proposal is more than depressing. We hope that Mr. Butlin will be public-spirited enough to admit his mistake, and to announce his change of mind.

Liverpool. W. S. TYSOE

[Critic writes: "The contrast I drew was between the wide area which I hoped would be kept for 'genuine wanderers and lovers of unorganised beauty' with some areas outside National Parks, which will inevitably contain 'holiday camps.' It is a question of their size, conduct and site."—Ed. *N.S. & N.*]

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Here are two passages. I want the reader to guess, in each case, who is the author.

> (1) And when we consider that other theory of the natural philosophers, that all other earthly hues—every stately or lovely emblazoning—the sweetest tinges of sunset skies and woods; yea, and the gilded velvets of butterflies, and the butterfly cheeks of young girls; all these are but subtile deceits, not actually inherent in substances, but only laid on from without; so that all deified Nature absolutely paints like the harlot, whose allurements cover nothing but the charnel-house within; and when we proceed further, and consider that the mystical cosmetic which produces every one of her hues, the great principle of light, forever remains white or colourless in itself, and if operating without medium upon matter, would touch all objects, even tulips and roses, with its own blank tinge—pondering all this, the palsied universe lies before us a leper; and like wilful travellers in Lapland, who refuse to wear coloured and colouring glasses upon their eyes, so the wretched infidel gazes himself blind at the monumental white shroud that wraps all the prospect around him.

Presuming (for the sake of our quiz) that the reader hasn't already placed this sentence from memory, I should like him to examine it again and decide two things: when it was written and, if possible, by whom; and how high in the scale, as a specimen of prose, he would set it.

Now for the other passage:

> (2) That morning, two bay horses drew two Laughs along the road that led to the hills from Saddle Meadows. Apt time they kept; Pierre Glendenning's young, manly tenor, to Lucy Tartan's girlish treble.
>
> Wondrous fair of face, blue-eyed, and golden-haired, the bright blonde, Lucy, was arrayed in colours harmonious with the heavens. Light blue be thy perpetual colour, Lucy; light blue becomes thee best—such the repeated azure counsel of Lucy Tartan's mother. On both sides, from the hedges, came to Pierre the clover bloom of Saddle Meadows, and from Lucy's mouth and cheek came the fresh fragrance of her violet young being.
>
> "Smell I the flowers, or thee?" cried Pierre.
>
> "See I lakes, or eyes?" cried Lucy, her own gazing down into his soul, as two stars gaze into a a tarn.

Possibilities of (1). Nineteenth century? Yes. Ruskin? De Quincey? No, but getting warm. . . . (2) is something of a corker. Nineteenth-century novel? Yes. H'm. *Not* Meredith? Not —A. S. M. Hutchinson?

Better give it up: in each case the author is Herman Melville. The excursus on whiteness comes from one of the best-known chapters of *Moby Dick,* and tenor and treble occur in *Pierre* —not a work of immaturity, but the next step or plunge taken by Melville after writing his masterpiece. Put (1) and (2) together, if you can. Knowing them to be by the same hand, one may seem to detect in the first—impressive though it is—a touch of the fruitiness that exhales "Smell I the flowers, or thee?"; but it can only be a suspicion. The gap remains.

I haven't been playing this little game altogether for fun. One way and another, it has teased me, this enigma of a very good, very bad writer, for the last three months. *Moby Dick* (to which I shall return in a moment) is a great book: almost everyone would agree on that. How I had looked forward, re-reading it after many years, to pass on to the discovery of other Melville books, and of Melville himself! Sad discovery, his greatness is confined to a single work; the rest, whether before or after, whether readable like *Oomoo* and *Typee* or unreadable like *Pierre* and *Mardi,* add very little. From autobiographical adventure he springs suddenly to the immensities of *Moby Dick,* and thereafter flounders or returns to his earlier flats. I have trailed here and there, on whalers and men-o'-war, through the South Seas, preferring cannibals to missionaries, enjoying the calm conscience and the melancholy that go with open skies; but then (inevitable return!) staggering, bemused, netted with riddles, aware of ever-deepening chasms into which the author was trying to shovel words. Some writers can employ words to fight a losing battle; Melville couldn't. He was too honest to evade, too courageous to give up, and finally he lacked the art to turn defeat into triumph (as, for example, Shakespeare did in *Timon of Athens* and even in *Hamlet*). After *Moby Dick* he felt he should be able to write anything; he encountered instead that barrier which has cut short many poetic lives. So far and no farther!

Melville's "madness"—like that of Rimbaud, Blake, or Van Gogh—reveals again the tragic attempt of the solitary to make contact with humanity; but reveals it pompously, naïvely, badly. What was its source? One turns from his writings to accounts of his life, and there again it is to meet with disappointment, though of another kind. True, the events make certain things plain; Hawthorne's friendship and harsh withdrawal, the public rejection of his work, the sexual disillusion of marriage, seem together to have completed Melville's isolation. Mr. Lewis Mumford, in what is by far the best life of him (*Herman Melville,* Cape, 12s. 6d.), lays a finger on the pulse when he says:

> In achieving his depths, Melville had missed the surface: he had brought up fire and lava and ashes, from that deep volcano of his being, but he had never, in maturity, properly explored the woods and groves and gardens that give men peace and untroubled love.

Melville is a curiously unsympathetic figure, as shown to us by this most understanding of his critics, and it is with a weary distaste that one reaches the picture of his old age, when his own children back away from him. Lives of Melville are not made easier by the fact that he is reverenced as a mystic.

One narrow approach to him I have found less beset by quagmires, thanks largely to the good offices of Mr. William Plomer. His *Selected Poems of Herman Melville* (Hogarth Press, 3s. 6d.) reveals only a minor poet, but one whose words, though unpractised, have still a cutting edge:

> About the Shark, phlegmatic one,
> Pale sot of the Maldive sea,
> The sleek little pilot-fish, azure and slim,
> How alert in attendance be. . . .

Many of these verses, as we might expect, are about the sea. In others Melville reveals with an unexpected directness his deepest conflicts. The sexual revelation of *After the Pleasure Party,* which might be set beside *Pierre,* seems almost shocking—"To dote, to come to this drear shame"; and with the separation from Hawthorne in mind the following poem acquires a tragic dignity:

> To have known him, to have loved him
> After loneness long;
> And then to be estranged in life,
> And neither in the wrong;
> And now for death to set his seal—
> Ease me, a little ease, my song!
>
> By wintry hills his hermit-mound
> The sheeted snow-drifts drape.
> And houseless there the snow-bird flits,
> Beneath the fir-trees' crape:
> Glazed now with ice the cloistral vine
> That hid the shyest grape.

Mr. Plomer has even salvaged fragments from *Clarel,* a 600-page verse journal of a visit to Palestine, which can have found few readers.

One comes back, then, after a somewhat dispiriting—and in my case, I must confess, finally abandoned—journey, to *Moby Dick.* Some doubts have arisen on the way. Is it the towering masterpiece it appeared to be? Can this inhibited and fumbling man, with an instinct for third-rate poetics, really have *written* a book as one remembers *Moby Dick* to have been written? Wasn't the whole thing a mirage, produced by Melville's material—the sea, the three-masted whalers, the great white whale of legend? It was with some misgiving—one must make sure!—that I had to look again. But there it all was, fixed like a dream: the leisurely and ominous beginning, the mystery of Captain Ahab, calm days and moonlight nights in the Pacific, the appearance of a whale spouting alongside like a burgher smoking his pipe, then whole communities of whales and the first kills, all the paraphernalia of the hunt, wild Elizabethan junketings on board, alarums, storms, Ahab soliloquising, the first news of the white whale, the appearance—"There she blows! she blows!"—the chase (first day, second day, third day) and the tremendous final tableau which seems, now that at last it is reached, to have hung before us in every detail since we began reading. And so in a sense it has. The first chapter, six hundred and fifty pages earlier, throws a blurred image on a screen: ". . . two and two there floated into my inmost soul, endless processions of the whale, and, mid most of them all, one grand hooded phantom, like a snow hill in the air . . ." and towards that image, with sharpening focus and excitement, with delays and additions, the whole book moves. So intense is this climax, which can yet be felt in innumerable hints on the way, that the longer it is postponed the fiercer it becomes. Melville's delaying powers—to say nothing of the encyclopædic skill with which he has enriched his imagination—are superb. Of the protagonists, Captain Ahab does not make his appearance till p. 150, and Moby Dick himself it kept for the last forty pages; but their situation, their interlocking, never wavers a moment. Melville knows exactly how far the imagination may be allowed to wander, at what precise moment it must be screwed tight again, if the suspense is not to weaken. Among the jocularities on shore, for example, the meals of chowder and Queequeg observing his day of worship, we are suddenly pitched out to sea by Father Mapple's sermon on Jonah, a staggering foretaste of what is to come:

> A dreadful storm comes on, the ship is like to break. But now when the boatswain calls all hands to lighten her; when boxes, bales, and jars are clattering overboard; when the wind is shrieking, and the men are yelling, and every plank thunders with trampling feet right over Jonah's head; in all this raging tumult, Jonah sleeps his hideous sleep. He sees no black sky and raging sea, feels not the reeling timbers, and little hears he or heeds he the far rush of the mighty whale, which even now is cleaving the seas after him. Aye, shipmates, Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship—a berth in the cabin, as I have taken it, and was fast asleep. But the frightened master comes to him, and shrieks in his dead ear, "What meanest thou, O sleeper! arise!" Startled from his lethargy by that direful cry, Jonah staggers to his feet, and stumbling to the deck, grasps a shroud, to look out upon the sea. But at that moment he is sprung upon by a panther billow leaping over the bulwarks. Wave after wave thus leaps into the ship, and finding no speedy vent runs roaring fore and aft, till the mariners come nigh to drowning while yet afloat. And ever, as the white moon shows her affrighted face from the steep gullies in the blackness overhead, aghast Jonah sees the rearing bowsprit pointing high upward, but soon beat downward again towards the tormented deep.

Of such high-charged narrative Melville is a master —*the* master, indeed; and though in general his "symphonic writing" may fall short of De Quincey's in verbal subtlety and power, it is put to vaster uses. In any case one can't detach sentences which owe their effect to an over-riding drama; or some of the asides and soliloquies and Shakespearean horse-play could be made to look like pastiche and nothing more; which, in their place, they are not. They help to enlarge the figures: a necessity of Melville's plan. I am not so sure about some of the pensive passages in blank verse (Ahab gazing into the sunset), but the proportions of the whole huge structure are so admirable that here and there we can afford to take detail for granted. What other book of the nineteenth century has a comparable scope and execution? I can think only of *War and Peace*; but Tolstoy's epic is a summit of prose and of history, while Melville's is individual poetry—a poetry, as it turned out, that finally expressed his sense of the adventure and malignity of life. After *Moby Dick,* his white whales became white elephants.

G. W. Stonier

THREE GENERATIONS

Off the Record. By THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD AND ASQUITH. *Muller.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Home Front. By J. L. HODSON. *Gollancz.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Who Only England Know. By JOHN PUDNEY. *John Lane.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

How rarely the reviewer's bundle of books forms a natural pattern! I recommend readers to do deliberately what I did by chance, reading Lady Oxford's reminiscences, J. L. Hodson's 1942-43 War Diary and John Pudney's air-travel book in that order. By so doing they will relive three generations of English Liberalism—the last of the oligarchs, the social reformers and the young men in search of their souls. Just because they are the unaffected expression of pleasant personalities, all three books tell us something of the spirit of the age to which they belong.

Do not be put off if you feel slightly embarrassed by the first impact of Lady Oxford. You are not the first to feel that way. Indeed, you probably share the feeling with no less than eleven Prime Ministers who nevertheless persevered and turned embarrassed acquaintance into warm friendship. In the twelfth Prime Minister Lady Oxford met her match: Lloyd George embarrassed her. How could it be otherwise? For he was the incarnation of those provincial twentieth-century forces which were to destroy the foundations of that brilliant London oligarchy which Margot Asquith and others like her so radiantly decorated. The little Welshman's dynamic has done away with the possibility of *style* as Asquith represented it in politics and his wife in society. No wonder Lady Oxford is embarrassed by him.

Off the Record is a delightful book, if only for the glimpses it gives into the famous diary. It is my earnest hope that I shall be alive to read the Asquith diaries when they stand, as they surely must stand, beside Pepys and Greville. Here is a typical passage:

> Shortly before we left 10 Downing Street, and I had had my talk with Mrs. Lloyd George, he (i.e. Bonar Law) invited himself to tea with me. (My husband was in the country.) He praised Mr. Lloyd George and told me that he was devoted to him. Looking at me rather significantly under his expressionless face, he said: "I suppose that you do not share my admiration for him, do you, Mrs. Asquith?"
>
> *Margot:* "You do not know me well enough to ask me any such question."
>
> *Bonar Law:* "I have just come from number 11 and am inclined to think that the little man next door will jockey us all in time."
>
> This remark amazed me. I replied, "You have seen him oftener than I have. It is ages since I have been in 11 Downing Street. Mrs. Lloyd George and her children share part of the garden with us. I have a great regard for her. If you are as devoted to her husband as you told me you are, why did you say what you have just said to me? I don't think it loyal of you. In any case, I would rather not discuss either with you or with anyone else someone who goes gossiping from door to door. . ."
>
> At this he interrupted me and said, "I only wanted to know whether or not you agreed with me—out of fun, as you might say."
>
> I confess that this made me indignant; all I could say was: "Do you take sugar with your tea?"
>
> After this we both seemed to be listening to the silence.

Lady Oxford also devotes some chapters to the present. The ribald, no doubt, will make easy fun; but the sensitive reader will observe to how few it is given to survive into an alien epoch alone, yet without bitterness—as Lady Oxford has done. By modern political standards she is, of course, a dangerous sentimentalist, demanding chivalry to the German enemy long after the little Welshman taught us that democracies are saved only when the German pips squeak. But what else can be expected from Margot Asquith who talked with sentimentalists like Gladstone!

J. L. Hodson's *Home Front* is a product of Liberal social reform, a workmanlike job of detailed observation and commonsense comment. It is inferior to *Off the Record* not only because it lacks style but because its author amasses impressions instead of selecting them. His meetings with famous men are all professional "interviews," whereas Lady Oxford reports only the occasional conversation piece. But just because *Home Front* is rather dull, rather average and level-headed, it is an invaluable record to which the future historian will refer.

With John Pudney we return from the amassing of facts to the deliberate creation of impressions. Here was a typical intellectual of the between-the-wars generation, a sensitive, rather ineffective poet. John Pudney sided with those who voted against King and Country; he despised Kipling and demanded simultaneously disarmament and sanctions. War and the R.A.F. have wrenched him out of these ideological grooves, throwing him into close contact with many types which he used to despise. Reacting violently, John Pudney in the fifth year of war has all the ardour of Rupert Brooke in the first, and lashes out against his pre-war self as he travels by troopship to West Africa, reports on Malta or describes Algiers. Here, for instance, is his present view of Egyptian politics: "My Indian journalist friend, who sees here a British rule mischievously preventing the forward march of democracy, is like the man who maintains that King James I composed the Acts of the Apostles. His faith has blinded him."

And here is his philosophy of air power: "Air power must always go hand in hand with self-expression. It must be a first principle not only to tell the bombers why they are going to bomb, but also to tell the bombed why they are bombed. The final justification of force is reason. *In air power, upon which the world is now being built, reason will always go with force*—unless this war is lost."

So a lost generation finds its soul—and returns to Kipling. But I doubt whether John Pudney will be permanently satisfied by this mystique. His sense of style, which gives his book its enduring value, should restrain him from such irrational exuberances.

RICHARD COVENTRY

ANTI-SEMITISM

The Devil and the Jews. By JOSHUA TRACHTENBERG. *Oxford: Humphrey Milford.* 23*s.* 6*d.*

Dr. Trachtenberg has examined with scholarship of high quality and acumen of real power one of the basic principles of modern anti-Semitism. By showing that, to the mediaeval mind in Christian Europe, the Jew was ever a species of the devil, guilty of sorcery, of witchcraft, of every species of evil to which the idea of Anti-Christ was relevant, he has shown how the stereotype of the Jew has been, at least in part, created for modern civilisation. It is an unrelieved tragedy that he unfolds, for he exhibits, in a degree hardly rivalled until the advent of Hitler to power, the capacity of the human mind to outrage reason, and to use the barbarism thus involved to profit from the misery of its victims. What he unfolds is, almost wholly, a long tale of lies, of self-deception, of cruelty, of hatred. Nothing rivals it in its unrelieved savagery save the grim tale of Putumayo or the bitter agony of the Belgian Congo. All that careful research can do to work out the implications of this pitiful record Dr. Trachtenberg has done. I imagine that his book will be widely read among Jews. It will tell them something, at least, of the sources from which their tragedy has been compounded.

But will it be read by those who ought to learn its ghastly lesson? No doubt it counts for something that the press of a great American university stands sponsor for the book; and it is not unimportant that the great resources of the Oxford University Press will be available for its European distribution. No serious student of anti-Semitism can doubt that Dr. Trachtenberg has made good his case. A hatred of the Jew, whether for his race or for his religion, is as irrational as a belief in witchcraft. Yet whereas the belief in witchcraft was at length slain by the power of reason to demonstrate its combination of wickedness and folly, reason has done little to destroy that anti-Semitism, conscious and unconscious, which has become so characteristic a feature of this age. The doors of the ghetto were partially opened after the French Revolution. But there are countries in which they have never been opened. There are countries in which, after a brief period of freedom, the doors have again been closed. And even where there has been a formal emancipation, the fact remains that barriers are erected even while the men who erect them protest with passion their belief in the right of the Jew to equality. Generation after generation, the diabolism Dr. Trachtenberg has so well analysed is reimpressed anew upon a sufficient proportion of each nation among which the Jews dwell to make it certain that the professional Jew-baiter will always find an enthusiastic body of support. It is pretty certain to-day that anti-Semitism is both deeper and more widespread than at any time since the Enlightenment. Its value to Hitler needs no emphasis. It is more general both in Great Britain and in the United States than it was in 1939. It even makes a claim to "scientific" foundations. Only the Negro can have suffered, historically, as the Jew has suffered. Dr. Trachtenberg gives us what I do not doubt is a real and important thread in the pattern. But if it were the vital thread I do not think it would have either persisted as it has persisted, or been capable of the fantastic revival which men like Hitler have been able to achieve for it. Nor, if diabolism were the central clue, would anti-Semitism have been able to beat the rationalist approach out of the field. We face an issue of multiple causation. Those who think the problem a simple one wholly mistake its nature.

No doubt the theory of diabolism explains a good deal. But behind it there is a mass of other issues which need to be carefully disentangled. There is xenophobia; there is economic rivalry; there is the degree to which the Jew refuses to accept the kind of assimilation which other refugee peoples accept without difficulty; there is the special occupational habits of Jews; there is the value they possess for any tyrant, as for Hitler, who needs to offer victory and its spoils to his followers; there is the sense, among the population among which he dwells, that the Jewish habit of mind, its energy and its vitality, give to the Jew a special advantage in the struggle for existence; there is resentment at the tenacity of his clannishness, or, conversely, resentment at the ease with which he adapts himself to a new environment. There is the suspicion that he is in some special way mysterious, or that his outlook transcends the boundaries of the nation among which he dwells. Conventional Christianity finds his rejection of Christ intolerable; and rationalism sees in his faith a superstition no more valid than other superstitions. Here he is hated because he is rich; there he is hated because he is poor. The diabolism which Dr. Trachtenberg has worked out with so much learning is, after all, only one element among all these, and one that finds acceptance, for the most part nowadays, among the ignorant and the brutalised rather than among any other section of the population. The men who preach it in Hitlerite Germany are the bullies and the gangsters, the specialists in pornography like Streicher, or the sophisticated careerists like Schacht. Men like Max Planck conform to a code of behaviour they are afraid to denounce, just as men like Sir Oswald Mosley use it as a weapon in their struggle for power; they weigh the value of silence or acceptance in the light of the mental climate in which they find themselves. I suspect that men like Father Coughlin preach anti-Semitism quite deliberately as a method of warding off the attacks of Protestant prejudice against their own faith.

What the future holds for the Jew no one can dare to prophesy. It is not an exaggeration to estimate that in the Hitler period about one-seventh of all Jews have perished; how many still must die before his overthrow one hardly dares to think. There are few countries in the world which open their doors with freedom to their entry; even Palestine is a half-forbidden land to the people who gave it first its dramatic place in history. There are Jews who seek with passion to affirm their right to nationhood; there are Jews whose one ambition seems to be absorption in the general population among which they dwell. Two things only, I think, are certain. Religious Judaism fades with rapidity among the younger generation; it is nothing like the bond of union that it was a half-century ago. And it is, I think, reasonably clear that those Jews who wish to survive as an independent people can look to none but themselves for life. To the leaders of the great nations they are not important enough, in numbers or in power, to be a matter of serious concern; to officials they are an administrative embarrassment because they examine the orders issued instead of obeying them. What is at least certain is that they will not die as a people without making a struggle to live which the whole world will be driven to watch partly with enthusiasm and partly with indignation. For there are several millions the world over who would rather lose their right hand than forget Jerusalem. For them the road to the ancient city is the path to salvation. And they have shown, as they wandered there, that, given the right to stand erect in their manhood, they have the skill and the determination to turn a wilderness into a paradise. HAROLD J. LASKI

AN INTELLECTUAL BISHOP

Retrospect of an Unimportant Life. Vol. II. By HERBERT HENSLEY HENSON. *Oxford Press.* 21*s.*

The second volume of Dr. Hensley Henson's autobiography is no less absorbing than the first. It begins in 1920 with his appointment to the See of Durham and ends in 1939, when he retired at the age of 75. The copious extracts from his diary lend the book a liveliness such as the memorialist can seldom recapture when he recollects his emotions in detachment. Ripeness of years did little to mitigate Dr. Henson's acerbity. He came, indeed, to command sympathy of Anglo-Catholics who had once denounced his heresies: not that he had changed his views, but some clergymen now advertised a scepticism about the Gospel story beside which his own reservations seemed mild. So that he now disapproved of biblical critics as well as of Papists, Anglo-Catholics, the "Protestant underworld," feminists and socialists. The sectaries of the Lutheran pastor, Frank Buchman, provided another target for his reasoned denunciation. He was in a high degree out of sympathy with the age in which he lived; and while vigorous intellect followed the arguments of his antagonists, he lacked the imagination to enter into their sentiments. In another respect also he resembled an eighteenth-century prelate; he delighted in the splendours of his palace. He had been brought up in a small house, and, he comments, "men value and desire that which is unfamiliar to them."

A champion of the revised Prayer Book, he became, when this was rejected by the House of Commons, urgent for Disestablishment. Such rigorous logic ill beseems the prelate of a Church founded upon compromise; and when Archbishop Davidson retired in 1928 Canterbury was awarded to the agile Lang, though Dr. Henson's intellectual powers had given the public some title to expect that he would be appointed. When the news came, he noted in his diary with characteristic honesty that he had desired the distinction of refusing the Primacy. If he is severe on his fellow bishops (and his accounts of the two Lambeth Conferences are of a candour that verges on breach of confidence), he is truculent also in self-criticism. Here are three typical passages:

> The Archbishop of Canterbury was, of course, discursive and non-committal; Barnes pontifical and irritating; Headlam infallibly dogmatic; Lang, whose picture in cope and mitre adorns the Y.P., was more than commonly vague and oracular . . .
>
> The immemorial combination of conceit and incompetence is nowhere more fully exhibited than among the clergy of my diocese . . .
>
> Twelve years ago I was operated upon, and my life was in jeopardy. . . . How strangely little change in me has been wrought! I am just as cynical, just as stubborn, idle and self-indulgent as before. . . . I am being urged by the salutary pressure of illness, and by the stern warning of a sudden arrest, to consider my ways, to revise my conduct, and to acknowledge my duty. And yet I find myself after twelve weeks as reckless, selfish, and secular as before! What can be done with so irresponsive and intractable a spirit?

The diocese of Durham, largely industrialised, was during Dr. Henson's episcopate racked by strikes and unemployment. He remained a Victorian individualist. His directness, however, seems to have commanded the respect of the miners, even when he boldly denounced the General Strike. The picturesque archaism of his nature resulted in a rigid and strait approach no less to temperament than to opinion. Psychological explanations of crime filled him with dismay. Again, on one occasion the Home Secretary wanted him to give advice in favour of prohibiting *The Well of Loneliness*, and the Archbishop of Canterbury asked him to do this. Dr. Henson refused; not because he favoured toleration—"I am in these matters, as in so many others, entirely out of sympathy with the modern world"—but because the whole subject was so disgusting to him.

Though very few readers can be expected to share all Dr. Henson's dislikes, his character is so vehement and his book so candid that he never fails to interest. He is a notable exception to the rule that only saintly or cynical ecclesiastics are free from cant. And there is something agreeably enigmatic in a man whose intellect has been so little affected by his environment.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

MACHINE-MADE TAPESTRY

The Teutonic Knights. By HENRYK SIENKIEWICZ. *A. Tyszkiewicz,* 72 Kenton Court, W.12. 16*s.*

The translation of this seven-hundred-page novel is written in good and unaffected English by Alicia Tyszkiewicz. The story itself is sorry stuff. It is a romance of the struggle between the Poles and the Teutonic Knights, and ends with the Polish victory of Grunwald in 1410. The characters are mere empty suits of armour, surrounded by a vast deal of antiquarian detail, in the tapestry manner. Machine-made tapestry, however, is the dreariest of textiles. Some of the incidents are mildly interesting; among them the pious suicide of Queen Jadwiga, fasting herself and her unborn baby to death in the sight of an adoring nation. Also frays illustrating the limitations of the chivalric code; a victor spares the vanquished, if he is a knight, but kills or enslaves prisoners of lesser rank. There is any amount of feasting and dungeons and torture and knights-errant hewing each other with battle-axes. The book might be enjoyed by children of the age which likes the far more successful *Talisman.*

All the same, historic conscience might keep this work, with its vitriol-charred first pages, out of the hands of children. It is frankly propagandist, and the preface by Lord Vansittart exaggerates the natural bias of the Polish author. Sienkiewicz is too honest a student of the chronicles to portray his Poles as any less bloodthirsty and aggressive than his Germans. But

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he thinks their aggression right, and that of the Teutonic Knights, moving beyond their base in East Prussia, wrong. And he adds cold-blooded cruelty, avarice, and unscrupulousness to the count against the Knights, while admitting their efficient rule of their realm. Now every German is taught at school that the Teutonic Order brought " the Cross, the Sword, and the Plough " to Prussia ; while every Pole is taught to remember the Massacre of Danzig. Who can arbitrate ? By rights, the Slavonic tribes of the region, Prussian, Samogetian, or Lithuanian, who were neither German nor Polish, but were the victims of these weary wars.

It is true that the Teutonic Knights bore a bad name for ruthless greed, and that the detestable set of values known as the " Prussian virtues " date from their legend. But these were more an out-of-date persistence of the standards of the Middle Ages than peculiar to the Knights. They had in their ranks many who were not German. What does Lord Vansittart make of Chaucer's verray parfit gentil knyght ?

> Ful ofte time he had the bord bigonne
> Aboven alle nacions in Pruce
> In Lettow had he reysed and in Ruce.

Certainly the Templars were as fanatical and cruel, and in their decadence were accused besides of vice, heresy, and sorcery. In fact, these orders of military monks, vowed to chastity yet living the lives of soldiers, to poverty and yet administering the immense wealth of their communities, were doomed to corruption. The evil went deeper yet, to the root of that violation of Christianity inherent in the Crusades. Nobody can read the history of these aggressions bred by propaganda, filled with treachery, rapine, massacre, and ever again hear the name applied to a cause without a shudder. They were the more ghastly because they blasphemously assumed the sign of the gentlest of the Gods. Plenty of simple men, no doubt, fought in them in good faith. But the professional Crusaders, in so far as they did not specialise in a really Christian job, as the Hospitallers did, became killers, annealed by the belief that their killing was holy, whether they slaughtered Saracens or Spanish Moors or Lithuanian peasants. It is in that spiritual arrogance that the moral for to-day can be found, for it is a leading Nazi trait—and is sometimes observable among the nationalists of the Allies, too. As for Lord Vansittart's sermon in praise of hate, it is painful rather than convincing reading. It is too easy to answer the thesis that Germans are the unvarying and irretrievable destroyers, which he bases upon selected historical instances. How long is it since we, or the French, were engaged in attacking a weaker nation ? Ask the South African Dutch, or the Moroccan tribes. Hatred is a passion even more disintegrating to the judgment than love, and Lord Vansittart writes as a man in hate. We are fully aware, if he could realise it, that Germany is a dangerous Power. But the violence of his feelings renders him incapable of giving us any useful advice on the German problem.

FREDA WHITE

When Hostilities Cease : Papers on Relief and Reconstruction prepared for the Fabian Society. *Gollancz.* 4*s.* 6*d.*

Post-war relief is in the news to-day, and these papers given to a Fabian Conference in Oxford a year ago might have been written as a commentary upon the recent meeting of U.N.R.R.A. in Atlantic City. This is an admirable book ; well-written, authoritative and quite explicit upon the major problems of a liberated but ruined Europe. A list of the authors and their subjects reveals its scope. Dr. Huxley discusses the political and social implications of relief and the task of reconstruction ; Mr. Laski writes of the machinery necessary for this purpose, emphasising that it is simple and obvious in principle, and that " more than any other factor . . . it might overcome the angry passions victory will unloose . . . and . . . recreate the atmosphere in which civilised existence again becomes possible." Mr. Marrack tells us of the terrible under-nourishment of the European peoples and outlines a policy for dealing with it that is based upon both scientific knowledge of nutrition and an understanding of the technical difficulties involved. And the other essays, on International controls, on medical relief, on agriculture and repatriation, are as admirable as we should expect from the standard of their stable-companion's work. Mr. Noel-Baker says in his introduction : " No reader will agree with everything in this book ; but no one can read its pages without having this tremendous issue brought before him, and without understanding better the policies we ought to follow." And the harder the future, the more need there will be for the kind of understanding and goodwill that has inspired those who have written this book.

TWO FRENCHMEN

WHEN the news percolates that some distinguished man has died in the Occupied Countries, it sharpens our sense of isolation—never before have we been so cut off from the culture of Western Europe. The deaths of Maurice Denis and Jean Giraudoux must grieve all who have benefited from French civilisation. Denis, both as painter and theorist, was a protagonist in the Post-Impressionist movement that has changed the face of English painting. Like Rouault, he found a vital inspiration in Catholicism, but his work is decorative and charming. Giraudoux was a fanciful and exquisite writer, over whose novels and plays a delicate but indefatigable wit ran riot, like the ornamentation of a rococo pavilion. He was an official of the French Foreign Office, and the preciousness of his style did not prevent him treating serious themes. *La Guerre de Troye n'aura pas lieu* was a painfully prophetic play, but his best work was such novels as *Suzanne et la Pacifique* and *Bella* and *Les Aventures de Jérôme Bardini* and the plays *Electre* and *Ondine*. Maurice Denis and Jean Giraudoux represented not the austere clarity that has been the predominant force in French art, but a sensitive delicacy that also has its place in this great tradition.

Week-end Competitions

No. 731

Set by Raymond Mortimer

Competitors in the past have excelled in providing imaginary Last Words for the living as well as for the dead, and it is perhaps prudent for each of us to choose our own in advance. The usual prizes are offered for the best suggestions for the Last Words of any three of the following characters (competitors may send as many entries as they like). Narcissus, Lot's Wife, Holofernes, Constantine, Calvin, Queen Elizabeth, Milton, Wren, Lord Chesterfield, Fontenelle, Sterne, Bentley, Catherine the Great, Rousseau, Fouché, Dr. Arnold, Disraeli, Wagner, Walter Pater, Henry James, Dreyfus, Landru, Laval, Mistinguett, Ribbentrop, Lord Baldwin, Lady Oxford, Lady Astor, Gandhi, Mussolini, General Montgomery, Hemingway, P. G. Wodehouse, Noel Coward, Allan M. Laing and the Editor of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 728

Set by G. W. Stonier

A not very good novelist sits down in the year A.D. 2000 to write a novel of England in the 1940's. He or she puts in plenty of local colour, most of it wrong. The usual prizes are offered for the best extract, of not more than 250 words, from this imaginary work.

Report by G. W. Stonier

Competitors have thoroughly enjoyed themselves this time, and between them they piece to-

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RHEUMATISM

Rheumatism—however mild your symptoms—exacts a merciless toll in pain and expense if not checked in time. Poisons and impurities in your system are often the cause of rheumatic disorders. To get rid of these poisons, doctors recommend the drinking of mineral spa waters. But a visit to a spa involves time and expense that many people simply cannot afford these days.

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gether a beautifully phoney picture of the present. Every detail rings false, from "the blitzes falling round" to Molotov cocktails being drunk at the Ritz and the clatter of clogs along Oxford Street. The Tube dwellers, as seen from the year 2000:

"... spotlessly clean and the air was kept fresh as a daisy. In spite of scarcity gay-coloured paint radiated everywhere. The dawning of the community spirit was already manifesting in creative self-expression. It was theirs for the time being. What more could the large-hearted Londoners want? It was almost too quiet down there as the trains moved in and out." (Robert Murdock Struthers)

Glimpse of the heroine:

"Pearl Joyd was in the Waacs., the women's army who so nobly fought by the side of their menfolk. Small, petite, a full lieutenant, in her ultra smart uniform she had come to 'Blighty' on leave from the front. Her head was neatly 'marcelled,' gone were the peace-time tresses, everyone's was short these days, King's Regs. ordered it clear of the collar. In it from the start, she had been attached to the Guards; the best shot in the regiment she was the heroine of a hundred dark sorties and attacks, in fact every inch a 'gorilla.' Yet in spite of the military appearance our grandmothers wore they had the eternal feminine in them." (F. G. Ordish)

And of the hero:

"Wendover was on air protection duty. The night was pitch black, and as he stood at his post on the top of Nelson's Column, his gas-mask at half pressure, and his Tommy-gun at the ready, he felt, in the expressive idiom of the time, 'browned up.'"

(Towanbucket)

It is not hard to determine the First Prize (Two Guineas); F.C.C., winner of so many fields, triumphs again here. A second prize of two guineas is divided between Eccleston Sharpe, Marjorie Redman and S. A. Goodster, each of whom is appropriately swept away by the subject.

FIRST PRIZE

Anthony stared at the smeared marble table-top of the A, B, C, D. For here he dined in solitude since his own club, the Athenaeum, centre of the brilliant youth of the Forties, had been razed to rubble. "The King, God bless him!" he murmured automatically over his cup of acorn cocoa, as once to Coral in "elegant tête-à-tête across the pre-war champagne. And then he pictured their flat as it was to-day. That one grim, blue bulb lighting the black-upholstered empty lounge. Empty, since Coral was in the T.I.T.S.; and in her rare home-hours, clad in neat gray uniform and yellow waistcoat, she appeared remote or cold as marble. To him she was now the Admiral's chauffeuse and nothing more. But was she nothing more to the Admiral? He choked. Yet perhaps she merely despised him! *He* wore no uniform; so naturally to her it meant nothing that he was a Government pharmacologist in an Inhibited Occupation. But it would soon! It should soon! He fingered the slender phial he carried concealed in his gas-mask—Stylliographin, that drug as deadly to all higher organisms as was the new Penicillin to the lower. And in a dim-lit dining-room. . . . He leapt up, and walked unsteadily towards the beckoning night, only to be arrested in the porch of the A, B, C, D, by the flat, steady blare of the warning sirens over doomed London.

F. C. C.

SECOND PRIZE

The War Game

At last. Young Beverley Huxley gave a sigh of relief as the familiar peaks of the Gogmagogs rose before him; how little had he thought, during his hectic years at Balliol, that Fate would lead him to be trained for Mountain Warfare upon those dreadful crags. Yes, and there was another landmark; brooding over the city of Cambridge as the dome of St. Peter's broods over Rome—the Radcliffe itself, shouldering King's Chapel and the Pepys Library. Scholar by instinct, soldier now by profession, he marked the ranks of Tanks in the Broad, the Bren guns filling the great Quad of Trinity; this was a new Cambridge; how far removed from the days when nearing Greats had sent him wandering by the raging Cam, repeating to himself the Codex of Justin Martyr and the clauses of Magna Carta dealing with the Defence Regulations.

What was that? The notes of a band, surely, and the tramp of innumerable feet—Canadians, clearly, or they would not be marching to the strains of The Star-Spangled Banner. Dash it, he must wait for that convoy to pass, and if he were held up much longer, he would be late for Hall—eight o'clock already by great Tom. . . . But who was that Wren, in the place of honour at the rear between the R.S.M. and the Colonel? Was it—yes, it was—Angela herself.

Eccleston Sharpe

She looked from the office window, high on the fifteenth storey of the Government building, at the burning city. She felt tired, too tired to strike the type-machine which lay on her work-table.

In a corner of the room lay the Admiral's powerful telescope. Languidly she lifted it to her eye. It was then that she saw them, the flat black barges: beyond the mouth of the Thames, beyond the coast, coming nearer, ever nearer.

She knew—and her heart sank—that on the foremos of those barges would be Gustav, his fair head flung back as she had seen him two years before on the mountain slopes near Innsbruck. The hand that held the telescope trembled. . . . There had been another Admiral who had put his glass to a blind eye. . . . She thought rapidly, leaning against the window's curved glass. Her eye travelled again over the burning city.

Her mind suddenly cleared. She ran into the corridor and up the stairs to the roof. There was the Admiral's gyroscope: swiftly she seated herself at the controls. "Far away would I fly," she thought. Then with a steady hand she guided the machine to the headquarters of the Home Guardians, those brave civil defenders, all that England had left. "Gustav!" she murmured, a sob in her throat.

She came down slowly on to the concrete roof. The Commander-in-Chief of the Home Guardians was pacing up and down. She landed beside him and came, white-faced, with her message. . . .

Marjorie Redman

Siren after siren took up the refrain, and from countless streets, the mournful warning of approaching ghastliness, was heard by the Peace-loving citizens. The night air was stabbed by vivid streaks of light as searchlights probed the blackness for the deadly invader. Before the Alien aircraft could be detected, countless guns were flashing and barking from every open space, and nay! from the very roof-tops as well.

Regardless of those distinctions which had hitherto separated them, the citizens performed various functions of defence. Stripped to the waist the youth on their gun sites sweated as they in desperate but undespairing haste, endeavoured with their volleys to form an impregnable barrier between their homes and the aggressor.

Oblivious of sex differences men and women worked side by side, conscious more of the sweet emotion of Patriotism than of their nakedness.

Steel-helmeted policemen together with various protective organisations patrolled the Streets and from time to time blew short blasts on whistles, as they detected by means of their portable apparatus, the imminent danger of bombs.

Between the din of guns and bombs, and seemingly from the bowels of the earth, a faint sound of singing was heard to emerge from the surface exits of Underground Railway Stations; where far below, the children, elderly, and weak, shared the crowded, confined and partially protective depths of underground platforms. Many of them rendered homeless but all undaunted, they sang their National songs in defiance of the Foe.

S. A. Goodster

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Personal

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Personal—continued

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Personal—continued

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